CHICAGO LEDGER

VOL. XXXIX. NO. 26. CHICAGO, ILL., SATURDAY, JULY 1, 1911. SINGLE COPIES 5 CENTS.

The Sign of the Beetle;

Or, The Mysteries of Chrysalis Street

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CHAPTER I.

AT THE FOOT OF THE STAIR.

CHOPPY was the first to discover the hideous thing that lay on the rich Persian rug at the foot of the stair.

It was five o'clock in the morning and Choppy, seemingly, was the first one awake in the big house with many windows, on Chrysalis street. Everybody knew the house, the home of the Marly-Grants—people who lived well because they had a mint of money at their command and also because their ancestors had lived well before them.

But the thing at the foot of the stair—that is what Choppy saw when he entered the wide hall.

He could have sworn that it was not there when he retired for the night, after seeing that everything was straight, for he had passed that very spot and there was nothing on the Persian rug but its gorgeous flowers.

Now it was different.

A light was still burning in the hall, and it fell upon the form on the rug. That is was a man like himself Choppy, the factotum, saw at a glance. The man lay partially on his face and was huddled in a sort of heap, and Choppy would have wagered his head, and he thought a great deal of that head of his, that the man was dead.

And so he was.

Springing over the dead man Choppy sprang up the stair and rapped furiously at a door on the upper floor. There was an oath inside, the click of a key in the lock, and a man looked out.

"What is it?" asked the half-dressed person.

"It's at the foot of the stair!" gasped Choppy, breathless and incoherent.

"It?"

"Yes, the dead man."

"Why couldn't he have died somewhere else?" growled Marly-Grant with a frown.

"Mebbe he didn't have the choosing," observed Choppy, as he turned away.

He was followed toward the head of the stair by his master. Choppy went down first, and stepping carefully over the inanimate thing on the Oriental rug, looked up at his master.

"Have you touched him?" asked Marly-Grant, pausing midway on the flight.

"Not me!" shuddered Mr. Choppy. "The law don't 'low that, you know."

Marly-Grant, a good-looking man of five-and-fifty, came on down and stooped over the body.

"It's not Mr. Russell," said Choppy.

"No, fool!" cried the master. "He's not coming back; you may depend on that."

"What is he like?"

Marly-Grant had raised the dead man's head and Choppy had summoned enough courage to steal a little closer. Silence fell about the spot.

"Never saw him before, so help me!" asseverated the factotum. "What little hands he has."

"Hush! You're no anatomist."

"What's that between his eyes?" cried the observant Choppy. "My it looks like a little round bruise."

He got another frown from Marly-Grant, who lowered the dead man's head and then covered the butler with a pair of keen gray eyes.

"Cover him over," commanded Marly-Grant. "We've got to send for the coroner."

Choppy looked around for a covering, but finding none, took off his coat and transformed it into a temporary shroud.

"Get your nerves and go to work. Telephone from the library for the police. No, I'll do that myself. Don't let any one touch the body till the officers come."

Marly-Grant disappeared from the hall, and Choppy heard the tingle of the telephone in the adjoining room.

"It beats my time," thought the butler to himself. "How cool the master is. But he's cool 'un at all times. That bruise is a hole and there's where this poor devil got the bullet. I never heard a sound last night, and I was sitting up with Dora in the kitchen till one."

Just then Choppy heard a noise on the stair, and looking up, he beheld Mrs. Marly-Grant, a florid woman of excellent avoirdupois, on the middle step.

"Don't come down, madam!" cried Choppy, gesturing. "We've sent for the p'lice."

Mrs. Marly-Grant clutched the banister and seemed to turn white.

"What's that down there on the rug?" she gasped.

"A human being, from all appearances," replied Choppy. "Leastwise, that's what me and Mr. Marly-Grant have decided."

"When did he come in?"

"I don't know, madam."

"Why doesn't he go out?"

"Seeing that he's dead, he can't well leave the house," was the answer.

"Dead? Is it——"

"No, it isn't Mr. Russell," and at this Mrs. Marly-Grant seemed relieved.

The following moment the husband emerged from the library and caught sight of the woman on the stair.

"Don't come down, Helen," he said, looking into his wife's face. "The sight is not for you. I've sent for the authorities. I——"

"Who is the poor wretch?"

"I—I can't say."

Fifty minutes later there were others in the house on Chrysalis street.

By this time the whole house knew.

There were gasping, white-faced servants in the hall, bending forward for a look at the silent thing on the Persian rug.

One of the newcomers, a little man in plain clothes, made a cursory examination of the dead man and looked at his two companions.

"Shot in the head," said he, sententiously. "Instant death, I should say."

Then he turned half round and cast his eyes over the breathless group in the hall.

Mrs. Marly-Grant had evidently gone back to her room.

"Some one must have heard the shot if this man was killed in the house," he said, addressing no one in particular.

All with one accord shook their heads.

"Who found this person first?"

"I did," said Choppy, stepping forward. "I ran upstairs and told the master. I——"

"Yes, Choppy summoned me at once," interrupted Marly-Grant. "I came down at once. The body hasn't been handled."

"How did he get in?"

"That's not difficult, sir," responded the master of the place. "We never lock the front door."

"It hasn't been locked since Mr. Russell went away," volunteered Choppy.

"Who is Mr. Russell?"

"He is my wife's son by a former marriage," said Marly-Grant. "We haven't heard from him for a year."

"This person is not Mr. Russell?"

"Bless you, no," was the response.

Marly-Grant stepped into the library, after having beckoned one of the uniformed men to follow him.

"Who's your man out there?" he asked. "I suggested that Mr. Campbell be sent."

"Campbell sailed yesterday on the America. The young man out there is Mr. Gwin."

"Quite young for a detective, don't you think?"

"Yes, but promising."

"Well, take the dead man away. My wife has nerves. You see she thought it was her son."

Meanwhile the servants had shaken themselves from the scene one by one.

Mr. Gwin was bending over the man, still on the Persian rug. His deep brown eyes were seeing everything. One of his hands lost itself underneath the dead man's shirt and found something on his breast. This object, a little silk sack, he disengaged and put in his pocket.

"Anything, Mr. Gwin?" asked one of the policemen a moment later.

Mr. Gwin shook his head.

"We'll have him out of the house in a jiffy," the officer said, addressing Marly-Grant. "Murdered men aren't nice people to have around. You heard no noises last night?"

"Nothing."

At this juncture Choppy came in through a door at the end of the hall. He was crumpling something in one of his hands.

"It's only a handkerchief," said he, in an effort to conceal the object upon which Mr. Gwin's eyes had already fallen.

The butler handed the fabric to the detective and explained that he had picked it up outside the house. Mr. Gwin placed it in his pocket where it covered the little bag he had taken from about the dead man's neck.

"I guess that's all here for the present," he remarked to his official companions, and with this he opened the door and walked out upon the broad, vine-covered porch.

"He's promising, is Mr. Gwin," repeated the policeman to Marly-Grant, who did not respond.

CHAPTER II.

THE HEAD OF PTAH.

Young Mr. Gwin had not gone far from the porch when he heard a footfall behind him, and the next moment he stood face to face with Aldus Choppy.

There was a look in the butler's eyes which at once arrested the detective's attention.

"I think as how I ought to tell you something," began Choppy, as he came up, and dropping alongside the detective, he kept pace with him as they went down through the little clump of trees toward the street.

"I shall be glad to hear what you have to say," remarked Mr. Gwin, "especially if it has a bearing on this case."

"It may have," said Choppy, as he sought his words. "You heard the master say that Mr. Russell hadn't been home for a year?"

"Mrs. Marly-Grant's son? Yes."

"Well, sir, Mr. Russell came back last night."

This bit of information, while it was totally unexpected, did not disturb Mr. Gwin. Perhaps he was schooled in surprises.

"Last night, you say?" he echoed.

"Yes, sir. I was sort o' sparking Dora. Dora's the red-haired maid. We were in the kitchen. One o' the windows looks out upon the grounds, you may know——"

"I haven't given the premises much attention as yet," said Mr. Gwin.

"Well, I happened to go to the door. The moon was shining quite bright. All at once I saw a man coming toward the house. He gave me quite a start, for when he came nearer I knew that I was looking straight at Mr. Russell."

"Well?" remarked Mr. Gwin, as Choppy paused.

"It was about ten o'clock," pursued the butler. "Master and mistress were both upstairs. I lost sight of Mr. Russell after he reached the porch, back yonder. He had a room on the second floor at the east end of the house. When he went away I don't know."

"You haven't seen him since, eh?"

"No, sir."

"What is Mr. Russell like?"

"He's a manly looking young fellow of twenty-four or thereabouts. We all liked him, and perhaps if he hadn't got tangled in love he would never have gone away."

"Oh!" said Mr. Gwin with a light chuckle, "it was love that exiled him?"

"Yes, sir. You see the folks didn't like his choice. They argued that the young woman wasn't good enough for Mr. Russell."

"Ah?"

"That was it," exclaimed Choppy. "There was a high scene one morning about a year ago and off Mr. Russell went."

"And to your knowledge hasn't been back till last night?"

"That's it, but he never done it, never in the wide world! He isn't built that way."

"Some pretty prim people do strange things sometimes," Mr. Gwin ventured.

"I know they do, but never Mr. Russell. What would he be doing shooting an unknown man in his mother's house?"

The detective was silent.

"Where has Mr. Russell been all this time?" he asked at length.

"I can't say."

"Didn't he ever write home for funds?"

"Precious little cash he'd have got from the money drawer because of his choice," exclaimed the butler.

"You didn't see the young man depart last night?"

"No."

"And you haven't looked into his room to see if he tumbled things about there?"

"I didn't investigate."

"Who was the girl in the case?" inquired Mr. Gwin after a moment's silence.

"Her name is Chalmers, or something like that."

"Lived in the city?"

"Yes, on Season street, as I once heard John, the groom, say, but I don't know why John made himself so busy as to find that out. Oh, it was Mr. Russell all right."

"I'm much obliged," said Mr. Gwin. "Mr. Russell's room is in the east wing, you say?"

"The last room there," was the answer.

The detective nodded.

"Something more about last night," he resumed, looking into Choppy's face. "You say you heard no shot?"

"I heard none."

"Don't you think you would have heard one had it been fired while you were with Miss Dora??"

"I believe I would," said Choppy slowly and with deliberation.

"And you never saw the dead man till you found him on the Persian rug?"

"Never."

Mr. Gwin was scraping the leaves about his feet.

"He didn't look much like a burglar, did he?" queried Choppy.

"He was well dressed."

"I noticed that."

"And what little womnish hands he had. I said this to the master and he said I was no anatomist," and Choppy smiled at the recollection.

Mr. Gwin found a little pebble among the leaves and flicked it away with one foot.

"I reckon I'd better go back now," resume Choppy. "I never told Dora about seeing Mr. Russell last night," and with this he turned and walked toward the house.

Ten minutes later Mr. Gwin completed his stroll and re-entered the house itself.

The body was no longer on the Persian rug. It had been taken to the morgue by the ambulance.

In the hall he suddenly came face to face with Mr. Marly-Grant.

"It's gone, thank fortune," said the portly man. "It gave me the shakes to see it there," and he glanced at the foot of the stair.

Mr. Gwin smiled in return.

"You've no objection if I look around?" he said in an offhand manner.

"Not at all, the house is yours, but I beg that you don't disturb my wife. She's got nerves like most women."

With this Marly-Grant disappeared in the adjoining library and Mr. Gwin mounted the stair.

On the upper floor he slipped along the corridor which led to the east wing of the roomy house. At the last door he paused and tried the knob. The portal yielded at once to his pressure and he walked inside. It was a small but elegantly furnished apartment, just the kind a young man would occupy.

The detective shut the door behind him and remained ten minutes in Russell Marly's room.

When he came out he went to the stairs and descended without encountering any one.

Shortly afterward he was at the street itself, for the house was set some distance back from the pavement, and three minutes later he was ensconced in a street car.

There was nothing in Mr. Gwin's countenance to indicate that he had found the barest clue to the strange murder. He even smiled at times when some over-eager person in passing out of the car gave his feet a pinch, and he seemed relieved when he was free from that torture.

Instead of going to headquarters or to his own room he dived into an alley-like way and mounted a flight of outside stairs where he found a narrow door.

The room which he entered was a shabby looking affair with curios of nearly every description on the walls on little shelves. For aught the uninitiated knew it was a junk-shop of oddities and the man who sat in an armchair near one of the dingy windows was in keeping with the curious outfit.

He was a man past seventy with the drawn face and keen eyes of a savant, and the moment he saw Mr. Gwin a singular smile overspread his face and he uncrossed his slender limbs.

"What's up now?" he quizzed. "You never come here unless you want something. The last time you were here you were looking for a Malay cresee in the matter of the strange murder in the foreign quarter. Is it a seventh century dagger this time?"

"Not that, but something else, Mr. Penelly," smiled Mr. Gwin.

"Well, this is a pretty good information bureau, if I do say it myself," grinned the old man.

The young detective drew nearer and leaned against a table near at hand. One of his hands was rammed into his pocket and the next moment he brought to light a little greenish silk bag with a string dangling from it.

Old Man Penelly became interested at once. He moved his chair toward his caller and his eyes glowed with expectation.

Mr. Gwin opened the top of the bag and shook it over the table.

"You've seen this sort of thing before, no doubt," he said raising his eyes. "It's a bug."

The old man reached out and picked up the strange object.

"Why, it's the head of Ptah, the Egyptian god!" he exclaimed. "We call these things scarabs. It's the sacred beetle sure enough, Mr. Gwin. Where did you pick this thing up?"

"I have just taken it from the breast of a dead man."

"An Egyptian?"

"No. I hope to hang some person by that little bug," smiled the detective.

CHAPTER III.

DETECTIVE AND MR. RUSSELL.

Old Penelly, the antiquarian, looked from the thing he held in his hand into Mr. Gwin's face.

"You have done marvelous things in your way," said he, "but I don't see how the head of Ptah can ever hang any one in this country."

Mr. Gwin looked across the room and then rose to his feet.

"You've got several mates for my bettle, I see," he remarked leaning over a small glass case.

"Yes, but none, you will perceive, exactly like this one," was the reply. "Your scarab is a peculiar one. If you will notice the color changes when you hold it in a certain light."

"I had not noticed," said Mr. Gwin, turning. "Indeed, I had paid but little attention to the one in your hands."

Old Penelly left his chair and came over to the detective. He raised the lid of the case and took out several scarabs which he laid side by side.

"I have never handled but one other beetle just like yours," he went on.

"Is that particular species so scarce?" asked Mr. Gwin.

"Yes. Ten years ago one of the royal tombs of Egypt was broken into and its mummies plundered. It was done by an organized set of robbers whose ostensible object seemed at first to be the golden ornaments in the tomb. But it was afterward discovered that nothing was really taken but the sacred beetles."

"The bugs, you mean??" smiled Mr. Gwin.

"Yes, you may call them what you please, but they are the head of Ptah, the greatest of all Egyptian deities."

"I don't see why any one would rob a royal tomb for a little think like the scarab."

"That is the mystery. It has been thought that the robbers belonged to a band, and that each member intended to wear the beetle somewhere about his person."

"Well, the murdered man wore his!" exclaimed Mr. Gwin.

"He was murdered, then?"

"Yes, mysteriously so."

"Where?"

"In a house on Chrysalis street."

It was apparent that light was breaking upon Mr. Gwin.

"There might be something in the theory that the tomb was robbed to secure the sign of some order."

"It is all supposition, of course," resumed the antiquarian. "I have just given it to you for what it is worth."

"If a beetle like this one were to be found on the breast of other people——"

"It would strengthen the supposition, eh?"

"That it would."

"What sort of people inhabit Chrysalis street?" inquired old Penelly.

"People of wealth and position," was the reply. "The unfortunate man was found dead this morning in the house of the Marly-Grants——"

"Hyphenated aristocracy!" broke in the old man. "I don't like them."

"No?"

"More gold than brains," Penelly went on. "I take it that you are going to find out who killed the man with the head of Ptah—if you can."

"That's my quest now," said Mr. Gwin.

The detective was soon on the street on his way home. It was the first time he had opened his door for several days, having just returned to the city after a short absence to be called to Chrysalis street.

As he entered his room his foot struck a white object on the carpet and the next moment he was holding an envelope in his hand. It was the work of an instant to break the seal, and his eye mastered the one line written across the sheet at a glance.

"Mr. Gwin, Detective—If you want Mr. Russell Marly he is to be found at No. 333, Rosemary street, city."

The unsigned screed had a certain fascination for Mr. Gwin. "Why not?" ran through his mind.

Russell Marly promised to become an important person in the elucidation of the new mystery and he resolved to hunt the young man up without delay. Therefore not two hours had elapsed when the detective turned into Rosemary street and presented himself at the door of 333. It was a modest two-story house, looking not unlike a score of others in the immediate neighborhood, and Mr. Gwin imagined that a drunken man seeking his own domicile after night on that particular street would be likely to get into the wrong house.

The door was opened by a middle-aged woman who looked at him with a question in her eyes.

"Is Mr. Marly in?" asked the detective.

"Yes, sir, upstairs in his room. Turn to the right, first door," and with this Mr. Gwin entered and without more ado proceeded to follow the directions.

He rapped on the portal and was told to come in in a voice which at once prepossessed him in its owner's favor.

A young man was seated in a chair with his feet resting on a stool. He looked at his visitor and then rose to his feet. Mr. Gwin noticed that the apartment was modestly furnished, that a bed occupied one corner and another held a small dark wood desk and a washstand.

"Are you Mr. Marly?" asked Mr. Gwin, as he moved toward a chair.

"That's the name they gave me at my christening," smiled back the other.

"I am Julius Gwin," responded the detective. "I'm going to be fair with you Mr. Marly. I'm a detective."

A shade of resentment crossed Mr. Russell's face but quickly vanished.

"I don't have many visitors, Mr. Gwin," said he, "especially men of your peculiar calling."

"I imagine not. You've been expecting none of my class, then?"

"One moment," said Marly, suddenly. "You're here on business, are you not?"

"Yes."

"Who directed you—my mother's husband??"

"As to that I cannot say. Your address was sent me by some unknown person."

"Oh," ejaculated Russell Marly, drawing back as he continued to eye his caller. "What is it, Mr. Gwin?"

"You haven't been home for a long time, Mr. Marly?"

"Yes, I've been home very recently," was the rather startling confession.

"Last night??"

"You are right, Mr. Gwin, I was home last night."

"Then you may know——"

Mr. Gwin was interrupted by the sudden lifting of the yong man's hand.

"You will excuse me if I halt here," he said with an amused smile. "Can't we discuss the weather, politics, or the state of affairs in Europe?"

"Or beetles?" added Mr. Gwin, watching the effect of his suggestion on Marly's face.

"You have me now!" cried Russell Marly. "No, wait a moment. I do know something about beetles for I've been to Egypt. You must know something about my enforced exile? Yes? After my little difficulty at home I became a globe trotter. It was not for long, though, but I covered a good deal of ground whilst I was at it. Beetles? Let me see. You refer to the Egyptian scarab?"

"Yes, to the head of Ptah."

"Are you somewhat of an Egyptologist, Mr. Gwin?"

"No, I have something here," and the detective drew forth the little silk bag and shook out the scarab before Marly.

The tenant of 333 Rosemary street gave a quick start at sight of the brilliant bug.

"That's it—the head of Ptah!" he exclaimed, suddenly lifting his eyes to Mr. Gwin's face. "I've seen the beetle in Egypt. I sent one home to Kate."

Mr. Gwin imagined that "Kate" was the young woman for love of whom Russell Marly had gone into exile.

"Kate threw the thing into the fire," Marly went on. "She told me how it frightened her. You don't know Kate? She's the one girl in the world for me, stands up for me against the world and —Wait, here she is!"

He had risen to his feet and was taking a photograph from the mantel. Marly placed it in Mr. Gwin's hands with the ejaculation:

"Don't you think a fellow could afford to go into exile for a girl like that?"

"So this is the fair cause of your exile?" simled Mr. Gwin, holding the photograph in the best possible light.

"Yes. You see I had two pictures of Kate and there was one in my room when I went away. Last night—"

"Pardon me. You went home for the one left in your room?" interposed Mr. Gwin.

"Partly for that."

"And you saw the man who was found at the foot of the stair?'

"I saw the man. What was he doing in the house? There, Mr. Gwin, you're not going to get another word out of Russell Marly!" and the lips of the speaker met like closing springs of steel.

"What has happened, miss?" asked Mr. Gwin.

"Russell has just been arrested. You know that I am the cause of his unfortunate exile for nearly a year. He has been abroad and came back but three weeks since. Perhaps you have heard of the arrest——"

"I have not," interrupted Mr. Gwin, "I have been out of the city tracing some jewel thieves and have been away from the beaten track of news. I have seen no newspapers for three days."

Miss Chalmers uttered an exclamation of astonishment.

"Then, indeed, you do not know," said she. "You haven't even heard of the second mysterious crime in Chrysalis street."

"The second one, you say?"

"Yes. An unknown man was found dead last night in the grounds connected with the second house from the Marly-Grant home. He was shot in the head exactly like the man who was found on the Persian rug, you know."

The detective's look became a stare.

"But, surely," he said, "these two crimes can have nothing to do with Mr. Marly's arrest?"

"There is just where you are mistaken, Mr. Gwin," and Miss Chalmers smiled.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SECOND MYSTERY.

A week speedily passed.

The roaring city, of which the home of the Marly-Grants was but a diminutive part, despite its magnificence had, of late, come face to face with so many startling occurrences that the mysterious crime in Chrysalis street was soon forgotten in the minds of many.

Mr. Julius Gwin suddenly found himself detailed on another case and headquarters had informed him that his rival Osbourne had been assigned to the foot-of-the-stair tragedy. Mr. Gwin knew what this meant. Osbourne would sit down and do nothing. Of course all this was not to the young detective's liking. The Egyptian beetle had invested Chrysalis street with an all-compelling interest. He chafed under his new assignment, for he believed that he had been taken off the trail because he was on the eve of important discoveries.

The inquest on the body of the man with the beetle had thrown no light on the crime. Indeed, it only seemed to invest it with new mystery. Mr. Marly Grant knew absolutely nothing, his wife, owing to extreme nervousness, had not been summoned, and the servants, one and all, testified that they had heard no shot. The Unkown had been found murdered on the Persian rug, and nothing leading to his identity had fallen into the hands of the police. Aldus Choppy discreetly kept from the coroner's jury his story about Mr. Russel's return, and Mr. Gwin did not deem it necessary to reveal the existence of the bug in the silk bag.

Thus the matter ended. Marly-Grant was too prominent a person to be kept in an unpleasant limelight. His wealth and social position must not be injured by even the slightest suspicion. His holdings were extensive, he had an office down town which was fitted up like a room in a palace, and he was kowtowed to by the "four hundred," in brief, he was a social lion and a man of vast capabilities and erudition.

Society knew that Russell Marly had been a year in exile. This fact, however, had long ceased to form a topic of conversation. The young man had dared to fall in love with a beautiful girl upon whose head Marly-Grant society had placed a ban and that was enough. The verdict was that Mr. Russell had been served just right. He had been treated as though he did not exist, and this was the proper thing.

Mr. Gwin in a few days was disgusted with his new duty, the tracing of a lot of diamond thieves through an unknown wilderness, and upon his return to the city he sought out his rooms in Rivington street and fell into a train of thought over his pipe. He was in this blissful state when he heard voices in the hall below, and catching his own name spoken by his landlady, he was moving toward the door when he heard the rustle of a dress on the stair.

It was the end of a September day. Already lights were flashing out in different parts of the city, but his own room was well in shadow. He was reaching out to turn on the light when his door opened slowly and he stood face to face with the person who had come up the stair, a young woman in a well-fitting street dress and the possessor of clear, handsome features. Mr. Gwin stepped back, and in response to her query assured her that he was Julius Gwin himself. When the light fell upon his visitor's face the detective started, for the resemblance between the photograph he had seen on Russell Marly's mantel and the young woman's face was striking.

"I am Miss Kate Chalmers," said the young lady in a rich, soft voice as she took the chair toward which Mr. Gwin had motioned her. "Something terrible has happened. I have come to you, Mr. Gwin, because Russell told me about your call a week ago."

"I shall stand by Russell to the end."

"Russell has been arrested for the murder of the last man, and it is openly hinted that he is guilty of the Persian rug tragedy."

"It is almost inconceivable!" remarked Mr. Gwin after a moment's silence. "But what does Mr. Marley say?"

"That is just what I want to talk about, or rather about what he does not say!" cried Kate Chalmers. "Russell has a secret, one which he will not trench upon. I cannot understand him, for it is the only secret he has ever kept from me. He will admit just so much, and then he becomes as silent as the Sphinx. He was on those grounds last night, but beyond this admission he will not go."

"It is against him," said Mr. Gwin. "Perhaps if he had kept silent altogether—"

"That is just what I told him," interposed the young girl. "What took him to Chrysalis street I do not know. He will not divulge the secret. The house upon those grounds belongs to his mother and has been empty six months. The dead man was killed in the house, so they say, but the body was found in the yard, lying on its back with a bluish mark in the forehead."

As she concluded Miss Chalmers rose to her feet and looked down upon Mr. Gwin with eyes filled with anxiety and fear.

"They found Russell at home," she went on. "He did not resist. He insisted, however, on sending for me and they waited till I arrived, hoping, no doubt, that I might tighten the coils which they have thrown about him. Mr. Osbourne, the detective—"

Julius Gwin broke the girl's sentence with a little cry.

"Did Osbourne make the arrest?" he queried.

"Yes, he and one other. Russell is innocent," and the hands of the beautiful speaker moved toward Mr. Gwin in a pleading gesture. "He is not capable of taking human life. I know his silence is against him, terribly so. If he would only speak out I am sure the iron doors would speedily restore him to me. But he will not. He must be saved with that secret, whatever it is, locked up in his breast. This is why I have come to you, Mr. Gwin. Russell will not speak, therefore we must speak for him. I am not ashamed to plead poverty," and her eyes seemed to flash, "but all that I have is at your service. I have saved a little. It is yours. Russell practically wrote his way around the world. He never heard from his mother and never a dollar of hers came to him since his exile. There is some sinister influence behind this dastardly arrest. Russell has been marked for a victim, but it is unfortunate that he persists in keeping silent when a word from him would clear the sky."

She ceased and looked silently into the imperturbable face of the young detective.

"It is unfortunate," said Mr. Gwin. "What this secret is Russell Marly, from what I have seen of him, will never divulge."

"Not even for me!" cried the girl.

"We must fight for him without the truth. We must find the clew and follow it."

"You will?" exclaimed Kate Chalmers springing forward with a gleam of hope in her brilliant eyes. "You will enter upon this strange case? Then Russell is saved."

"Let us not be too sure of this," said Mr. Gwin, slowly shaking his head, "I will do my best. Say nothing to Mr. Marly about this interview. Send no word of your coming to me. You haven't told him of your action?"

"I have told him nothing."

"Good!"

"I go from here to his mother. I—"

"No," said Mr. Gwin with emphasis. "You are tabooed at that house."

"I know I am. But for me Russell would be a free man at this moment. I have offered to free him from his engagement, but he will have none of it."

"Which marks him the lover he is," was the reply. "A woman like you is worthy the love of the best man in the world."

A deep flush overspread the cheeks of the beautiful creature before Mr. Julius Gwin.

"I shall stand by Russell to the end!" she exclaimed. "He never raised a hand against either of those strange men. I stake my hopes of Heaven on that, Mr. Gwin."

The detective took a hasty turn about the room and when he once more faced his visitor he said in deliberate tones:

"I am in this affair to the end, whatever it be!" and he held out his hands in a pledge that again sent the hot red blood through the girl's every vein.

Five minutes later a man stood at the little window which looked from Julius Gwin's room upon the street. He was alone. The footsteps of Russell Marly's love had died away on the lonely stair. For an instant he caught sight of her trim figure on the street below, and then it vanished.

"A man who loves a girl like that is worth fighting for," said he, and picking up his pipe, he dropped into his armchair and filled the space above him with fleecy rings.

The continuation of this highly interesting story will be found in the Ledger issue of next week. Read it. If you are not a regular subscriber to the Ledger we would like to have your name on our list. The Ledger is only $1.00 per year.

Barrel Hoop Route.

A more picturesque mail service than that wnich is operated for the benefit of a few hundred setters who dwell in the northeastern corner of Minnesota, between Lake Superior and the Canadian border, would be hard to find. The name of this corner is Cook County.

The method of distributing the few pieces of mail which penetrate the northern forests is known among postal men as "the barrel hoop route." While critics might find in it a strong proof of the unbusinesslike character of Uncle Sam's postoffice, it is considered a monument to community honesty the equal of which could never be attained in more crowded sections. In fact, the honesty of its patrons is the sine qua non of the system.

To the northeast from Knife River stretches a bleak country, covered with timber, interspersed here and there with a settler's home or the half-cleared spaces which denote the march of the lumberers through the forests in search of the best timber. Beyond Baptism River lies Cook County, into which no railroad has yet entered. It is a cold, forbidding territory, swept by chilly winds off Lake Superior. Its largest settlements are the Pigeon Indian Reservation, in the extreme northeast corner, and Grand Marais, a small village on the shore of Lake Superior, entirely out of touch with the outside world, save for the few vessels which carry mail there in summer and take back to Duluth the few fish caught along the north shore in the winter time. However, steamers cannot ply to Grand Marais, and the village must depend for its mail upon a messenger and his dog team, who make their way across country from the terminus of the Duluth & Northern Minnesota Railroad at Baptism River.

The Federal postoffice has solved the problem of delivering mails to the settlers along the logging railroad in a daring manner. Obviously it would be impracticable to establish postal stations at any point except a trading center, and of these there are none after Scott is passed. Farmers along the line above that station must plod many weary miles to Grand Marais or to Scott for their supplies, and the trip is one which is made only three times a year at the most. So it was decided, rather than allow letters and newspapers to lie in either of those postal stations for several months before delivery, to distribute them along the railroad wherever the settlers would place a pole, with a box or other receptacle for the mail. Many of the "stations" are equipped with an ordinary coffee sack affixed to a barrel hoop, and by virtue of this fact the route received its name.

A mail car, in charge of a clerk, is dispatched over the line two or three times a week. At each pole a short stop is made while the clerk picks up the letters which the settlers have left to mail, reads the notes with money inclosed asking for stamps, fills his orders and deposits the mail for those farmers who make it their station.

It can be seen that the success of the system is utterly dependent on the honesty of the settlers, for when one calls for his mail he must of necessity wait over his neighbors' in order to get his own. Stamps and packages, however, rest as securely in the sacks as they would in the most carefully guarded Federal building until their owners call for them. The Duluth postal officials, under whose jurisdiction the territory lies, say that they have not received a complaint as to the loss of a piece of mail since the system was started several years ago.

Little Mothers.

The little girls of Japan are real little mothers. Many a small maiden in Japan goes out to her games of tag and bouncing ball with a wee sister or brother tied on her back with a big broad sash that she always wears. Sometimes she turns the baby around and plays she is a pilgrim carrying the goddess of mercy on her back, while the other children pretend to worship the goddess.

The Rough Rider;

Or, FIGHTING HORACE'S SECRET

By Adrienne Roucolle

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Begun in No. 21, May 27. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, or our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER XIV.

AFTER THE WAR.

"DANGEROUSLY wounded?" asked Wilbur.

"Fatally so, I hope," answered Horace; then: "Go on to victory and to her."

Blackrock rushed up at this moment, and lifting Horace on his shoulder, said to the still hesitating captain, "I'll look after him."

Wilbur no longer hesitated. "Forward to victory, boys," he cried, as he rushed on at the head of the advancing column, heedless of danger, fearless of death. Fate was to decide whether he was yet to be happy. If Horace died and he lived, June might yet be his. So onward he went, giving no thought to the flying bullets, sure that whatever was to be would be. Meanwhile Blackrock had carried Horace to the rear in spite of his protests. When they reached the tree from which Touch-me-not had fired his treacherous shot, Horace ordered of the halfbreed:

"Leave me here, Tom. I want to die fighting."

Tom understood, and without a word he rested the wounded man by the tree; then he said:

"Let me dress your wound."

"You haven't time. You are needed at the front. Leave me. I am facing the enemy and may have enough strength left to do my share of the fighting."

Speaking thus, Horace grimly raised his gun, took aim, and fired toward the blockhouse; then smiling weakly, he added:

"If do no good I will still have the consolation of trying. Leave me now and do your duty."

But Blackrock was standing like one unable to move, his eyes fixed on the trickling stream of blood coming from the wound between Horace's shoulders.

"You're wounded in the back," he cried, after awhile.

"I know it," answered Horace calmly. "Still I was facing the enemy."

"One of the men, then!" muttered the halfbreed between his teeth, and so intense was his thought that one could almost read in his eye the name his lips did not utter.

Fighting Horace understood the thought, for extending his hand, he said:

"Never mind, Tom, it may be for the best. Go, do your duty."

Silently Blackrock wrung the extended hand; then, without a word, he went away, rushing to the front with reckless bravery, yet with one thought uppermost in his mind—to avenge in some way his wounded friend. Horace, in spite of his pain, continued firing; then, suddenly amid the clamor of the battle, the sound of voices near by caused him to turn. Paradise Lost had just placed the wounded reporter by the tree against which he was leaning. When he turned, the old Texas ranger recognized him. With an oath, he was beside him.

"Fighting Horace wounded!"

"Yes, but still fighting. Never mind the wounded, Paradise, your work is in front."

"Sure," laughed Bates, "we two will keep each other company. While Horace shoots I will finish writing my report. Everybody to his job."

Paradise Lost pressed the reporter's hand, saying: "You writer chaps are O K." Then, to Horace, as he crushed his hand, "I'm going to fight for two. Good-by."

The fighting continued hard and furious. The fatal hill was strewn with the dead and wounded; still, the American soldiers crept on and on until the Spaniards were forced to retreat before the advancing human wall which closed in upon them. The blockhouse was captured and the American flag replaced the Spanish colors as the exhausted men cheered themselves hoarse, forgetful in the joy of the moment of the price of blood and life this victory had cost.

Horace, from his place by the palm, had witnessed the change of flags. He knew that victory was theirs. With his last strength he staggered to his feet and waved his hat in a farewell salute to the flag, for which he thought he was dying; then all went black before him, he staggered blindly forward and dropped to his knees. He thought that was the first touch of death, and with a hoarse good-by, June!" he gave away to his weakness, realizing with his last moment of consciousness that his death left June free to become Wilbur's wife. Could he have seen at the top of the fatal hill a bleeding, breathless form in a captain's uniform, could he have looked in the staring eyes of the dead officer, he would have known that his pang of jealousy was groundless, for death, a most glorious death, had stepped in between June Ashley and Captain Wilbur. With the last volley from the retreating Spaniards, Wilbur had received his answer with an almost instantaneous death.

For weeks and weeks, Fighting Horace lingered between life and death. Carried from hospital to hospital, his wound was a long time healing, then the deadly malarial fever caught hold of his weakened body and for days his life hung on a thread. When finally he was out of danger his weakness was so great that other weeks passed in the semi-somnolence of a long and tedious convalescence. He simply let himself live, too weak to think or plan for the future. As in a haze, he would remember June and the past, but in the general weakness of his half dead body neither the brain nor the heart could feel deeply or truly. He was only a breathing frame of flesh and blood, not a thinking being.

Then, with returning life and strength came back the recollection of the past. He saw it such as it had really been, and he judged himself guilty beyond pardon. He had condemned without a hearing a woman who had never given him cause for suspicion, and now he knew that she was innocent, he felt that for a proud heart like June's there could be no pardon, so he decided not to try to see her again. He did not know of Captain Wilbur's death, and in the sad visions of his awakening consciousness he could see them together, loving and happy. He would not intrude upon that bliss. As soon as he was able to travel he would return to San Antonio and resume once more the active, dangerous life he was leading before the war.

When, after months of waiting, word was received in San Antonio of Horace's return, the joy of his friends was boundless. Sallie Ruthford decided that his home-coming was to be the occasion of a warm and rousing welcome. The idea was taken up by his other friends until, when the day of his arrival finally came, one would almost have thought that the President of the United States was about to pay a visit to the town. Cowboys, stockmen, Texas rangers, and soldiers for miles around had arrived, each eager to do homage to the local hero. Nowhere was the activity greater than at the San Anton, future headquarters of the returning soldier. Yards and yards of bunting and hundreds of flags had changed the aspect of the little inn, while in the kitchen, under the care of Sallie and an old colored cook, a gastronomical feast was in the course of preparation. Sallie, trying to superintend everything, was kept running from the kitchen to the reception-room, where her husband and daughter, assisted by Paradise Lost and Colorado Joe, were adding the finishing touches to the decorations.

Standing in the middle of the large room, her hands on her hips, she was watching the three men draping a long streamer of red, white and blue bunting across the room.

"Look out you don't fall and break the showcase, Colorado," she cautioned.

"No danger, Sallie," he answered with a laugh. "I'm steady on my feet again."

"Well, don't trust too much to your wounded leg, it can't be as strong as the other."

"The thought that Fighting Horace is coming back would make it well if it wasn't."

"He came very near not coming back," Ralph tried to say, half turning and nearly falling from the chair he had placed on top of the reading table.

"Look out!" cried Sallie sharply, rushing to him. "You don't want to break your neck before seeing Fighting Horace."

"I don't think he'll want to even after he hurried to greet the newcomer.

"Mr. Bates!" cried Lola gleefully, as she, too, hurried forward.

Colorado Joe's face darkened. Since his return from the war, Lola had given him great encouragement, and though he had so far been too timid to speak and know whether the winsome girl would care to share his lot, he was living in rosy dreams of future bliss. But Bates' return filled him with dread, as he remembered how attentive the city man had been before the war. So instead of hurrying forward with the others, he busied himself straightening some flags, murmuring under his breath: "I'll be blasted!"

"When did you get in?" asked Sallie, after the hand-shakes were over.

"This minute, so you see I didn't lose much time to get here," casting a significant look toward Lola, who turned away her head and looked slyly toward Colorado Joe to see how he took the return of his one-time rival. "How are you fixed for rooms?"

"Haven't a one," answered Sallie.

"What?" cried Bates in dismay.

"Well, you see Fighting Horace's coming back today and we're giving him a celebration. As he's to stop here, every one of the boys wanted a room so as to be as near him as possible, so every room in the house has been taken for over a week."

"I knew of the celebration but I hadn't figured on the rooms being taken." It was evident that Bates was greatly disappointed.

"Never mind, you can bunk with me," offered Paradise Lost.

"I'm not worrying about myself. The trouble is I've a lady with me and she wants to stop here."

"Is she your wife?" cried Colorado Joe, jumping from his chair in the eagerness of his relief.

Bates turned in surprise.

"Why, Colorado, where were you all this time? I didn't see you?"

"I was fixing the flags," answered the cowboy in a half-shamed manner, regretting his involuntary exclamation.

"Is the lady your wife?" asked Sally, interestedly.

"Not at all," laughed Bates, with a meaning look toward Lola, which caused Joe to turn away with a muttered curse. "I'm still free, though not fancy free. The lady is a friend of Fighting Horace. She will be disappointed."

"Oh, if she's a friend of hisn, it's different. We can find room for her. She can have Lola's room," said Sallie.

"Thank you!" cried Bates, relieved. "I will get her. She's waiting in the carriage outside," and he was gone before any one had time to say a word, returning almost immediately with the lady.

When Sallie saw the newcomer, a frown gathered on her brow, for the face was completely concealed by a heavy black veil.

"Here's the lady, Mrs. Ruthford," announced the reporter.

"What did you say the name was?" asked Sallie suspiciously, feigning not to have caught the name.

"Mrs. Culbert," answered June, for it was she.

Still Sallie was not satisfied. "Isn't it pretty warm for a veil?" she commented.

"Do you want me to remove it?" asked June gently.

"Yes, ma'am, I do. You see we run a respectable place here and——"

"Oh, mother!" broke in Lola in sudden indignation.

"You shut up!" snapped Sallie, "I'm running this place, and I tell you right now that I won't take in people who make a mystery of their looks. It doesn't pay."

"Didn't I tell you I vouched for her, Mrs. Ruthford, interposed Bates, with a show of anger, but June motioned him to silence, then slowly unfastened her veil.

"Never mind, Mr. Bates," she said. "I can easily satisfy her."

The veil fell from the beautiful face and Paradise Lost and Colorado Joe, seeing it for the first time, cried in one voice: "The captain's sweetheart!"

A wan smile, full of infinite sadness, curled the drooping lips as she said gently: "That exclamation must tell you the reason why I wore the veil. I did not want the men of the late Captain Wilbur's command to recognize me. I wanted to save myself the pain."

Sallie turned to Bates with a bewildered face, saying:

"I thought you said she was——"

She could say no more for Tom Blackrock had entered unnoticed and advancing to Sallie he said in low, tense tones, as he placed a week-old baby in her arms.

"Sallie, will you take care of him until I find him a home?"

"A baby!" she cried in astonishment, while all drew near to see the child and hear what answer Blackrock would make to Sallie's next question: "Whose baby is it?"

"Plokee's," answered the halfbreed darkly.

"Then you have found her?"

"Yes, in time to see her die!"

"Die! Oh, I'm so sorry. Poor Plokee," and Sallie lifted the covering from the baby's face to see the features of the tiny stranger.

June, who was standing near, bent eagerly forward to see him also. Something in the ill-formed brown face with its crowning mass of jet black hair, touched her. The helplessness of this

A farewell salute to the flag.

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June, who was standing near, bent eagerly forward to see him also. Something in the ill-formed brown face with its crowning mass of jet black hair, touched her. The helplessness of this

"Why it's Scribbles!" cried Paradise, as he he had placed Paradise Lost from the other side of the room.

"I wish I knew the cuss who shot him in the back," remarked Colorado Joe, as he descended from his perch on top of the cigar counter.

"It isn't hard to make a guess, though," muttered Paradise Lost, "but it's being sure that's the rub."

"Whom do you suspect?" asked Lola, with wide-open eyes. "Might it not have been an accident?"

"Those accidents don't happen, sis," answered the old Texas ranger. Then surveying the room with a critical eye, he turned to Sallie, saying: "I'm not at all sure that Horace will like the idea of this celebration in his honor."

"Didn't he distinguish himself at Guasimas?" snapped the big woman.

"Sure, there's where he got his lieutenancy, but you know well enough he never likes to boast of his achievements."

"It isn't he that's boasting, it is us," she answered back shortly, and as he had finished nailing the bunting and had jumped to the floor, she ordered, "better help Ralph carry the table to its place."

Paradise Lost obeyed without comment, used as he was to give in to the bossy woman. Suddenly all were startled by a "Hello, everybody," which caused them to turn to the door. The reporter, Bates, was entering.

motherless babe struck a responsive chord in her mother heart. Her own arms were so empty, her own life so sad. Was not this orphaned child the answer to her passionate prayer for relief from the desolation of her solitude? Horace might never be hers again, he might refuse the offering of herself she had come to make. If he did where could she look for consolation save in becoming a mother to this helpless child, born, as she easily guessed, outside of wedlock, and the cause of its mother's death?

"Did you say it's mother was dead?" she asked eagerly. Tom nodded, unable to speak. "Did you say you were going to try to find a home for him?"

"Yes."

"Then give him to me," she pleaded.

"Who are you?"

"Mrs. Horace Culbert."

He started at the sound of that name. In an instant he recalled the conversation he had overheard one night in Tampa, when following his enemy, Touch-me-not. She was Fighting Horace's divorced wife, sister of Touch-me-not, former sweetheart of his old college friend, Captain Wilbur. These memories made him hesitate and she, fearing a refusal, pleaded:

"Please don't refuse my request. My heart is so hungry, my arms so empty. Let me take his dead mother's place."

"Very well, keep him," answered Blackrock with sudden decision, then, with a terrible look, he added: "You will soon be his only natural protector."

Then without a backward look, without another word, the halfbreed turned and left the inn, and those who saw him go understood that he had gone out to avenge the dead.

CHAPTER XV.

THE RETURN.

Several hours later, June had retired to her room with her precious charge, Sallie and Lola were busy in the kitchen, Bates, smelling a story, had gone out to look up Blackrock, Ralph was out on an errand for his wife, so that Paradise Lost and Colorado Joe were left alone in the big room, waiting for the arrival of the train. Everything was ready, and the two men were smoking in silence. Suddenly Joe asked:

"What do you think about it, Paradise?"

Paradise started; then asked: "About Blackrock?"

"No, about that reporter, Bates, coming back like that?"

"Nothing surprising in that, he's coming to write up the doings and Horace's return."

"Didn't you notice how pleased Lola seemed?"

"Why shouldn't she be; that Bates is a brave chap."

"He'll be making love to her again."

Paradise Lost looked at the rueful face before him, then, broke out laughing, saying: "What if he does. This is a free country. Would be doing it myself if I had the nerve, but that chit of a girl scares me stiff when it comes to saying sweet things to her."

Colorado Joe threw away his cigarette and started making another. It was evident Paradise Lost was not sympathizing with him.

For a time neither spoke, then both were startled by George Corley asking, as he entered the inn:

"Is Massah Horace come?"

The two men turned; then, seeing the negro, Colorado Joe remarked as he resumed his former position:

"It's only Chocolate Drop."

"Is Massah Horace come?" again asked the colored man, as he rolled uneasy eyes about the room.

"No," answered Paradise Lost shortly.

"When will he be here?" insisted the negro.

Lazily Paradise Lost turned toward the clock, then answered:

"In twenty minutes if the train is on time."

Corley's fright increased as he said: "I must see him. I don't want him killed!"

"Killed!" The word brought the two men to their feet, each seizing the colored boy by one arm and shaking him rudely, asking:

"What do you mean?"

"Who wants to kill Horace?"

More frightened than ever, Corley stammered:

"Touch-me-not—but don't tell him I told you!"

In a moment the two men had the whole story from the negro. Touch-me-not had heard of Horace's return and had come to town with the intention of forcing him to keep his promise. He was at present with several boon companions in Indian Pete's saloon. Though he had been drinking heavily, he was not so drunk but that he could shoot straight. When they had gathered this much from the terrified replies of the colored man, who kept begging them not to betray him to Touch-me-not, Colorado Joe turned to Paradise Lost in consternation, saying:

"Fighting Horace told him 'after the war.'

"Horace needn't fight him if we can only prove that Touch-me-not broke the truce by shooting him in the back."

"We can prove it, and Horace would never forgive any interference on our part. Oh, hell!" and Colorado thrust his hands in his pocket with a gesture of helpless rage.

"You won't let him kill me," pleaded Corley in trembling entreaty.

"Certainly not," answered Paradise, as he handed some money to the negro. "Go in to the bar and have a drink on me. Be sure you don't come out of there until this affair is settled."

"Yes, sah. Thank you, sah," and Corley pocketing the money disappeared in the bar.

At this moment the distant sound of a band playing "Marching Through Georgia" came dimly to them. Paradise Lost looked up at the clock, thrust on his hat and made a rush for the door.

"The band! Horace will be here in five minutes. Come along."

Colorado was going to follow when Lola entered asking:

"Wasn't that the band playing?"

The young man paused on his way to the door, and turning, answered, as his face flushed red to thus find himself alone with the pretty girl:

"Yes, it's going to the depot. Are you coming to meet him?"

"Mother won't let me. I must dust this room first," answered the girl regretfully; then suddenly, "If you were to help me a little, Joe, I might be through in time to go to meet him part way."

"Sure I will. Where's the dust rag?" cried the big fellow.

Soon the two were busy with the dusting. It was evident that Colorado was dying to speak, but dared not. Three or four times he had opened his mouth, but his courage failed him. Finally, after clearing his throat several times he said:

"I suppose you're glad Mr. Bates is back?"

Lola paused in her dusting long enough to answer with a mischievous smile: "Yes, aren't you?"

"Well, not exactly," he answered frankly.

She looked up with assumed surprise, for she was enough of a woman to guess what was troubling the young man, and she took the sudden resolution to force him to speak that very afternoon. So she said:

"I thought you liked him."

"I like him well enough; that isn't what's troubling me."

"What's troubling you?" and she began to dust furiously.

Colorado Joe advanced a few steps, then retreated, his face red, beads of perspiration standing on his brow.

"Nothing," he stammered. "At least, I mean——that I——well, I suppose there'll be a mighty little chance for the rest of me now that he's around."

"Chance for what?" she asked, blushing deeply.

"Can't you guess?"

"Feeling that she had gone far enough in encouraging the avowal of his love she answered somewhat impatiently:

"A woman isn't supposed to guess; she has to be told!"

In one leap he was by her side, his hand clasping hers, his eyes beaming with joy.

"May I hope, Lola?"

She laughed. He was so boyishly timid yet so deeply in earnest.

"I suppose so, if you will only tell me what you're hoping for."

"It's you!" he cried, seizing her in his arms and pressing her to him in a bear-like hug.

When she had recovered her breath, she said as her head dropped confidently on his shoulder:

"Why didn't you say that first?"

For an answer he kissed the tempting lips so dangerously near his own; then after a while, he asked:

"You love me, then?"

"The fact that I did the most of the proposing should tell you that!" she laughed happily.

The sound of the approaching band cut further conversation short, for to break Joe's embrace, Lola ran to the door, crying:

"He's coming!"

She was right. Horace protesting, yet moved almost to the point of tears, was nearing the inn, carried on the shoulders of two men followed by a crowd of cheering men, women and children, and accompanied by the band hired for the occasion. The procession did not pause until Horace was placed on his feet in the center of the large room, where Sallie stood ready to greet him, her eyes bright with joyous tears. Horace, choked with emotion, moved as he had never been before, looked about him on the smiling faces of his friends, saying, in gentle reproach:

"Boys, boys, you shouldn't have done this!"

"Why not?" asked Paradise Lost.

"Because I'm only one in thousands, and it is not fair to signal me out. Each and every soldier—Rough Rider, regular, the sailors, the volunteers—merits equal honors."

"That may be true, but they don't belong to us as you do," broke in Colorado Joe.

"They belong to you, since they belong to Uncle Sam."

"Speech!" called one voice, and the cry was taken up by the others. "Speech, speech!"

"Yes, Horace, give us a speech," insisted Sallie.

Horace hesitated for the space of a second, then answered:

"You boys know I'm not a speech-maker but I am glad of this opportunity to have you lift your hats with me in honor of our heroes bothing living and dead, and to give with me one rousing cheer for our leader and our friend Theodore Roosevelt!"

A deafening shout greeted the close of his words. "Hurrah for Roosevelt!" "Hurrah for the Rough Riders!" "Hurrah for Fighting Horace!" mingled in one until it was impossible to know who was being cheered the most—the commander, the regiment, or the returning soldier. All crowded around the local hero, eager for a word, a handshake, or a smile. Horace, smiling and happy, finally turned to Sallie asking:

"Are you responsible for this, Sallie?"

Proudly she answered: "I sure did my share."

At this moment the side door opened and June entered. Her face was deathly white and the trembling of her limbs caused her to stagger as she took a few steps toward her former husband. Then unable to go farther, her eyes riveted on his, her heart scarcely beating, she extended her hands pleadingly, saying:

"Horace!"

The man turned at the sound of that voice, looking at her as though she were some apparition from another world, while he exclaimed hoarsely:

"June, you here!"

A solemn hush had replaced the noise of a minute before; all eyes were turned on the man and the woman, while to each came the conviction that something unusual was taking place, something which was to change the entire future of the two actors of the scene. After a silence which seemed to all to have lasted several minutes, but which was in fact of only a few seconds' duration, June asked timidly:

"May I add my greetings to those of your friends?"

"Horace, recovering from his surprise and emotion, hastened to her and seized those extended hands in both of his, asking in low, tense tones, so that only she could hear:

"Does this mean forgiveness for the past?"

"Yes, I would have brought it to you sooner had I but known where to find you," she answered, her whole being swayed by the thrill of those hands crushing hers.

This dramatic story will be concluded in the next issue of the Ledger. Read it. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you if you send in a year's subscription. It only costs $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

Sparing the Rod.

To use the rod is to spoil the child. And yet to let the child run wild is to spoil it just as surely, and even more hopelessly.

A child must be disciplined. the Nautilus observer. It must be trained to do right; it must be trained to have certain responsibilities and to discharge those responsibilities faithfully; its energies must be directed in intelligent work. It must be taught to command itself; it must be trained to be kind and thoughtful of others.

How to accomplish all this training without resorting to physical punishment is a big problem. That it can be done is proved by the fact that a great many people do it.

But I notice that most of the parents who are able to do it are those who were well brought up themselves and who have splendid command over their own tongues and temper and actions.

Children reflect their parents, and the parents who would have intelligent, polite and skillful children must begin by training themselves to intelligence, politeness and skillful work.

Child training is after all a problem of parent training.

The parents who keep always in mind that they are to so treat the child that it will want to do the right thing will not go far astray, and they will not resort very often to corporal punishment.

Prayer and love and ingenuity must be cultivated ad libitum. Nothing else will take their place.

There should be a few well defined laws for every child to obey and there should be absolute obedience required, not sometimes but every time. With the exception of these few absolute laws the child should have perfect freedom of action and continual fresh inspiration to right thought and right action, which includes useful work. Love, literature, music and art all help.

Men Who Lace.

The building of the Cape to Cairo Railway in Africa has led to the opening up of some of the darkest districts in the unexplored regions of the dark continent.

The latest to be thus opened to civilization is the land of the Langos, who inhabit a country to the east of the Victoria Nile, and the Bahr-el-Gebel, about three degrees north of the equator.

Deep, superstitious ignorance wraps those aborigines. They are cannibals and ever at war with the surrounding tribes.

As to dress, it consists for the women and men alike principally of ornaments, and these are as unhygienic as are the stays worn by civilized women and some civilized men.

Bands of finely plaited grass are worn by the men around the abdomen. These suggest a tightly laced corset.

Iron, or, more rarely, brass ornaments have place on the upper arm. These are put on when the man is young, and as the arms grow force the muscles of the biceps out below them.

In one case the girth at what should have been the broadest part of the biceps was only eight and a half inches over the wire, while lower down, just above the elbow, it was fifteen inches.

Lip ornaments are made of glass filed down from pieces of broken bottles. The hole into which these ornaments are inserted is from a quarter to half an inch below the lower lip. The pointed end of the glass is outside; the thicker end inside against the lower incisors.

Earth Eaters.

It is well known that certain clayey earths have been long used as foods. Clay is composed of silica, alumina, and water, colored by metallic oxides. Some samples of edible earth are composed of innumerable microscopic and fossilized shells of fresh-water infusoria. How men come to have recourse to such aliment may be without evidence; but similar circumstances have led to like results in countries remote from each other. The Otomacs, a people of Southern America, take regularly a pound or more per day of a rich clay which appeases hunger without injury. Among the Indians on the borders of the Amazon clay forms part of their food, even when other aliments abound. Edible earth is found in Bolivia, and one kind, which has an agreeable odor, is much esteemed by the Peruvians. The negroes of Jamaica have recourse to it when other food fails; on the other hand, the negroes of Guinea, transported to America, seek for an earth like that to which they have been accustomed, and in its absence they consume the white pipe clay, to the injury of their health. In the kingdom of Siam the women and children are the earth eaters; in Java a sort of cake is made of ferruginous clay, which is eaten to produce leanness. It is an object of commerce in Annam and Tonquin. The usage is widespread, existing in Guinea, New Caledonia, Siberia, Terra del Fuego, and among some descendants of the old navigators in Portugal. The Indians of the Dutch colonies of Java and Sumatra make a peculiar preparation with edible earth, reducing it to a paste with water, spreading it on thin plates, morsels of which are grilled in a pan over a charcoal fire.

Bugs.

Several thousands of bugs came to Boston from Calcutta a few days ago. There are bugs of every conceivable shape and size and color, and they are all hungry. They are for the use of the Government bureau of entomology (you do not have to pronounce that word if you don't care to) in its fight against the worms that destroy vegetation in America.

TRY MURINE EYE REMEDY.

for Red, Weak, Weary, Watery Eyes and Granulated Eyelids. Murine Doesn't Smart—Soothes Eye Pain. Druggists Sell Murine Eye Remedy, Liquid, 25c, 50c, $1.00. Murine Eye Salve in Aseptic Tubes, 25c, $1.00. Eye Books and Eye Advice Free by Mail.

Murine Eye Remedy Co., Chicago.

Certainly Does.

The Teacher—Now, Tommie, r-u-b, what does that spell?

Tommie—Don't know, ma'am.

"What's the first thing you do when you bump your head?"

"Cry, ma'am."

J. P.

Those suffering from weakness and lack of vigor should take JUVEN ELIA. One box will tell a story of marvelous results. This medicine has more rejuvenating, vitalizing force than has ever before been offered. Sent postpaid only on receipt of this advertisement and $1. Made by its originators, C. I. HOOD CO., proprietors Hood's Sarsaparilla, LOWELL, MASS. (2)

They Needed a Change.

Doctor Curem—I see you have ordered quite a number of your patients to the country. They needed change, I presume.

Doctor Bigfee—Awfully. Hadn't a cent left.

LADIES, PRESERVE YOUR YOUTHFUL APPEARANCE.

Madame Mignette's Beauty Cream and Skin Food removes every defect, spot, blotch, pimple, blemish or wrinkle, leaving the skin soft, clear and smooth. It is perfectly harmless and will not injure the most delicate skin. It preserves and brings back the youthful glow to the face and ruddiness to the cheeks, preserving it in this condition until extreme old age. This preparation has been used for years and hundreds are now using it and are more than delighted with the results. Send us ten (10) cents for formula which you can have filled at any drug store at a very small cost. Do not delay, but write at once. Box 501, Blairsville, Pa.

After the Scene.

Crimsonbeak—I gave my wife a rainbow kiss when I left the house this morning.

Yeast—What in the world is a rainbow kiss?

"One that follows a storm."

STRANGE or DEATH
OR A Doctor's Mystic Power
By ALVAH MILTON KERR.

Begun in No. 16, April 22. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, our agents, or by mail from the office of publication.

CHAPTER XXXVI.—Continued.

IT WAS as one lying in flames and the cedar box broke upward before me as if it were paper, and I leaped out onto the cold floor of the tomb and fell, and writhed and screamed, and, for a little space, lost my reason, in the unutterable anguish of returning life.

At last my blood felt cooler, its awful burning died away, and I was conscious of a gray light filtering in through a jagged rent in the wall. In the same moment a sound from my mother's coffin caught my attention. I stopped and listened, perplexed; for I was like one in a mad-house dream, then suddenly the truth bounded into my brain, and I was fully conscious as in other days. A joy that was a sort of splendid terror leaped upon me. I sprang at the box, shouting and savagely tearing at the lid with my naked fingers. Turning about helplessly, I saw stones near my feet upon the floor, stones that had been thrown down from the rent in the wall by the lightning bolt. Seizing a ragged rock, I splintered the covering of the box, and tore it away. Then split the coffin-lid, crying to the one within with every blow. In a moment my fingers were in the cracks of the lid, and I had wrenched it off, and the dear one struggling there sat up and stared wildly an instant in my face, then dropped against my breast insensible.

For a space I was truly beside myself, for I thought her dead. I took her from the wrecked coffin as if she had been a child, and tearing out the shattered masonry where the bolt burst into the tomb, crept through the opening and drew her out upon the rain-soaked grass. A misty dawn was breaking, and as I looked around for some restoring means, I saw that the electric fire had rived an oak in halves downward, running off by an outward flaring root toward the tomb, into which it had burst and shocked and set the pulses of our lives in motion. Lifting a detached tough from the grass, I shook its dripping leaves above the white face at my feet, causing a mimic shower of drops to rain upon it. Suddenly the swooning woman struggled up, as one might from sleep, and stood wavering and staring strangely about her, at the riven tree, at the broken tomb, and off to the old familiar valley. Then her eyes came to my face, she reached out her hands and fluttered into my arms, and our hearts ran over with that which I cannot now put into words, for even the memory of it makes all speech seem thin and trivial.

Presently with my arm about her, for her strength was little more than a sick child's, we turned our feet toward Magnolia House. My own limbs trembled under me, but I felt strong with the exaltation of a great joy. Sweet mother was alive again, and I had turned back from death to meet my Marguerite!

As we drew near home, our wavering steps quickened, I felt the blood mounting to my head like dancing wine. I saw the dear one's face beside me, pale but glorified with joy, and heard it panting eagerly. Then I saw, as I looked toward the front of Magnolia House, the tall form of the blind professor, Branford, on the upper gallery. Marguerite—my Marguerite!—was leading him by the hand! As in a flash, I saw that she was his daughter. A cry broke from my lips at the sight, and ere we reached the gate, Marguerite burst through it, and after her came Dr. Beckwith! The hands of both were outstretched to us, their faces strange with gladness and wonder and the glow of an indescribable welcome.

To set down the words which were then uttered, to picture that meeting, is not for me. He who reads must needs conceive within himself what it is to return from the grave and be folded in the arms of those who love him. To the writer, that meeting, and the words and looks and kisses of it, and the hours of that day in which it fell, are as jewels cast up in the fountain of memory, falling back by times in the shadow of passing cares only to appear and reappear like glittering gems, as the years of his daily life spend themselves and are no more.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

With the advent of morning, next after that memorable day, Jude Cackler, the swamper, came to Magnolia House and asked me to come to his cabin in the forest at the edge of the Dead-lanes. Accompanied by Dr. Beckwith, I complied with the swamper's invitation, and by ten o'clock of that day we entered the cabin in the clearing. There we found the full solution of this strange matter.

Upon a bed in one corner of the main room of the swamper's home lay a man dead. It was Dr. Stanwood!

Gray, withered, distorted, changed beyond belief, he lay before us. For some moments I was not able to grasp the mysterious fact, yet indubitably the wasted form had been Dr. Stanwood's when the glory of vigorous life had filled and moved it. But whence came he? How came he here? In his bosom we found the explanation, an open record of all the secret steps of his career. This was a paper written by himself, and I here lay it before the reader, save such parts of it as bear but lightly, or not at all, upon the drama of which my weak words are an attempted record. It read as follows:—

To All Men:—

Greeting and Warning: that others may not fall, I, Julian Stanwood, write these words.... I was born and reared in England, near the city of Bath. Of our family there were five members, a father and mother and three brothers. Anthony was the eldest, Danton and myself were two years younger than Anthony. Danton and I were born within the same hour. We were alike in form and face, but there the likeness ended. Of the trio of brothers I proved the dominant, ruling spirit. Both the others had yielding, pleasant natures; especially was this true of gentle, loving Anthony. Drawn from the same soil of life, molded by the same prenatal and natal conditions, I know not how we could differ thus; but it was so. I have sought for the cause in the philosophy of transmigration of soul, questioning if my spirit were not older than theirs, and by that means made more potent. But now I am as a child; I know but one thing truly, that power and knowledge are dangerous if misapplied, and that great gifts put to selfish ends turn to evil at last.... I graduated from college very young. The ease with which I mastered learning, and the facility with which I have gained life's luxuries, proved fatal. I grew to scorn legitimate effort, caring only for possession. .. Directly upon my graduation I went to the East Indies in the employ of a scientific mission. Being there brought in contact with a great master of mysticism, I learned, what I had long felt, that mental influence over the common individual was extraordinary. Taking my cue from this discovery, and feeling that a great future lay before me, I became a deep student of occultism, and, specifically, of physical influence. In this art, (or secret diabolism) I became a master. Seeing what great power God had placed in my hands, had I gratefully used it for my fellow's good, instead of entirely for my own pleasure and enrichment, all would have been well. .... Returning to England after four years' absence—I was then three and twenty—I found Anthony and Danton, together, engaged in business. Anthony was married and had one child, a boy named Francis. The child was less than a year old. The young wife was very beautiful, and, without wishing it, I grew to love her. With the growth of my passion for Anthony's wife I came to hate the man himself; first, because he loved and possessed the woman I craved, and, second, because the law of primogeniture would give him practically all our father's accumulations. In an evil hour all that was manly and decent in me broke away before the temptation to use my power upon him. I planned a singularly grave crime, not involving murder, however, and secretly executed a part of it myself, and partly through the great influence I brought to bear upon his unsuspecting mind, and partly through accident, he fell into it. Unfortunately, and contrary to my expectation, Danton was also caught in the great trap of infamy which I had set. Both were compelled to flee their native land for all time. To what country they went, or if together, I did not know.... Our mother had then been three years dead, and our father survived the shock less than a year. Elizabeth and Anthony had lived under father's roof-tree from the day of their marriage, and the young wife and her child remained there still. Daily and almost hourly I was with Elizabeth, and as the months went by, she turned to me. Unconsciously I fascinated her; my will became a law that her nature obeyed as the needle obeys the magnet. It was so until the end.

With father's death the entire estate fell under my control, and, a great odium lying upon us from the late crime, I succeeded in realizing a large sum of money upon the property, and came, with the young wife and child, to America, taking residence in New Orleans. Having gotten her a divorce, of a uncertain sort, we were wedded. I then sought and found a valley of great beauty and seclusion in Florida, and brought into existence Magnolia Place; first, that I might escape a certain haunting fear of my wronged brothers, which never ceased to follow me, and second, that I might free myself, for a portion of the time, from questionable and depleting pleasures, and temptations to crime which year by year drew fearfully upon my abandoned nature. The capacity in me for good and evil, as in most men, had been well-balanced in the beginning, but gradually, through my crime and its sequence, the even quality was broken: evil in me, by use, outgrew the ever-diminishing capacity for good, until I became little more than a handsome fiend. I hated myself by times, but conscience and the power to see and feel the beauty and nobility of virture, industry and good deeds, seemed lost to me. .... I grew ecstatic to hate the meek, sweet woman I had wronged mainly because I had wronged her foully in the beginning, and still outraged her truth and constancy when absent from her. The child I hated always, for his presence was a perpetual indictment of my infamy, a living memory of the decent creature I had once been, and a galling protest against the serpent-life I now led. I kept him from me as far as possible; when near me, I treated him cruelly.

I spent a portion of my time in New Orleans, but was much in other places, notably in Havana, Cuba. I owned a swift little ship named the Lady Marie, but seldom went aboard of her, her real business being that of smuggling opium and manufactured tobacco into the United States. She was in the immediate charge of two brothers named Breslau, the elder of these brothers at one time being part owner of the ship. In furtherance of this unlawful trade I fitted up a superb hashish-house in New Orleans, realizing enormous profits from it. My relationship with the two brothers, in the beginning, sprang out of the fact that the eldest, under my instruction, developed a marvelous psychic power. He was the most capable man, in this regard, that I have ever known, but through the poison of opium he fell into abject ruin. The hashish-house was recently consumed by fire, and almost at the same time the Lady Marie was wrecked and her crew lost. This knowledge but lately came to me, in part through a secret avenue, the remainder by open report. . . . This writing can injure no one so much as myself; beyond that it strikes only reputations which were unworthy and now, happily, are closed. . . . .

Throughout the whole period, some twenty-two years, since my first great sin, my singular gift has been a mixed one, a source of evil to me. As my moral nature relaxed, my power for hurtful meddling with the wills and lives of others seemingly increased; it may have been through use, as a muscle by action grows in size and strength. To bring a kind of unconsciousness of their own deeds upon others, to substitute my will for theirs, to create false mirages in minds illusions serving only my own ends, became the passion and occupation of my life. Once Breslau and I went so far with the reduction of sensibility in a child that death, or its appearance, ensued. We were not able, or could not find the way, to restore the child to life. Its death, for I was its physician, passed as a natural one. This discovery changed the whole aspect and possibility of crime. However, I never again put to practice this extreme use of my power until of late, but in the main was content with less revolting and less dangerous projects.

Among others, of the opposite sex, to fall under my influence was one Therese Devereaux, a beautiful danseuse. I met her in New Orleans. For a time she believed herself my wife, but learning by an accident that I was already wedded, she attempted my life while we were making a journey to Havana. In self defense I threw her from the steamer into the sea. It passed as an accident; but later I made a bosom friend of one of the most charming scoundrels any man ever knew, and to him I revealed the secret. This man's name was Lancewood Shirlaw. His business in life, I found too late, was that of detecting crime in others, not upon the law's account, but to criminally use the knowledge gained for his own good. Why I gave him the secrets of my own life I know not; only this I know, his power of persuasion was as insidious and alluring as that of Satan. He set in motion all the forces, which, running through a whole gamut of crime, have left me a wreck. . . .

This man Shirlaw was the only son of a deceased sister of a certain rich physician of New Orleans, Dr. Beckwith by name. Dr. Beckwith also had two nieces, daughters of another sister, the wife of Professor Branford, keeper of a school for the blind. Mrs. Branford has now been dead quite a year. These two nieces of Dr. Beckwith were named Marguerite and Helene. Both were educated in a nun's school, and the latter became a sister. Marguerite was the younger, and both Dr. Beckwith and Professor Branford were fearful that she would follow her sister in renouncing the world. Dr. Beckwith had one other prejudice. Owing to great disappointment in his own youth, he felt, or affected to feel, no confidence in marriage as a means of happiness. Having these three young people for heirs and one, Helene, being a nun, and one, Shirlaw, not wholly to his mind, he pledged Marguerite that if she would neither marry nor enter the order of sisters, but would make his house her home, he would bequeath her his wealth and in the meantime build and equip a new school for her father, who should also live with them. The girl, being but little beyond childhood, having no accepted lover, and being an ardent votary of the religion of duty, consented; but before beginning her task as mistress of her uncle's house, went to Tampa to visit a friend. There she fell into my power, was secretly married to me, and in secret went to live at Magnolia Place. Mark you, the thing she did, under my influence was a precise reversal of her intention. . . .

That all may be understood I turn to Shirlaw. Clearly, under the conditions, if Marguerite married, she would look in vain to Dr. Beckwith for his fortune; and Helene having given herself to the church, where Beckwith would let no money follow her, Shirlaw thought he saw his way to his famous uncle's riches. He wished but one thing, to get Marguerite married. Plainly she would wed no one save a man like myself, one who had power to reverse all things in her mind, making all things seem what they were not. Knowing my secrets, he forced me to yield to his wish or accept ruin and perhaps death. I revolted, and arranged with the mate of the Lady Marie to dispose of the fine conspirator. But, fortunately for himself, Shirlaw sent me a little marble alto-rilievo of Marguerite, and I fell a prey to her beauty. I then undertook this crowning infamy! . . .

To clear the way, I reduced Elizabeth, my wife, to the condition of that child, the first victim of my own and Breslau's experiments. After that Marguerite came into my power as a bird flutters into the snake's mouth. The boy Francis, now grown to manhood, then came home. We quarreled upon the bridge near Magnolia House, and I felt to the water as one killed. I drifted out to sea upon the detached floor of a cabin, brought from the interior by the flood. I clutched and drew myself upon it some distance below the bridge. My throat was frightfully injured. I have never spoken since. After five days of drifting and dreadful suffering, I fell upon an island, and after many weeks of inexpressible hardship, returned to Magnolia Place an utter wreck, gray, bent, with a face partly paralyzed, and unable to speak. . . .

Upon the island I found the body of my twin brother, Danton. He had met his death in the sea during a storm, being thrown to land by the troubled waters. On his person I discovered evidence that he was owner of a plantation within the island. In my enfeebled state I could do no more than make him a grave in the sands of the shore. Attempting to penetrate the island forest in search of his home, I was picked up by a party of hunters, who, coming at length by boat into Charlotte Bay, put me ashore, at my request, three miles southwest of Garcia. Thence I made my way through the forest to Jude Cackler's cabin, here in this sunken field. . . . Heaven, earthly happiness, all were lost to me. I had but one hope left, and that was to take the life of Francis Stanwood! I wished no eye to see how broken and hideous I was, but to strike him like a fiend out of darkness, then die. . . . He had not yet come home. I waited, going by times to Magnolia Place by night, through the Dead-lanes and on the river in a canoe. Once I rowed out to the road through a bayou and sat there watching for my prey. Instead of the young man my brother Anthony came, going toward Garcia. . . . Again I went to Magnolia House. Through a window I saw Marguerite; her head lay upon the bosom of the man I hated; she kissed him! O my God! . . . I came again; he was lying asleep in the rose arbor; I summoned all my waning powers and froze his life in him! He will never waken more! I wish all men to know that I triumphed at last; that living I wielded power beyond the gifts of other men; that dying I destroyed my enemy, and that I yet have kindness enough remaining to wish that no other may follow in my footsteps. . . .

Jude Cackler has been my friend; no guilt attaches to him; in his simplicity

and sympathy I deceived him. And now, farewell. . . . . .

JULIAN STANWOOD.

To the reader much of this strange story must now seem clear; to me, who have pondered it long and sadly, many of its phases are still insoluble marvels. I know that the man I saw in his grave upon the island was Dr. Stanwood's twin brother Danton, my unfortunate uncle, and that the fiendish being who stood beside me in the rose arbor and silently wrapped me in something like death's silence, was my foster father, Dr. Stanwood. Why his identity was not then plain to me may perhaps lie in the fact that I saw him with my soul instead of sight's common organs, and the moral hideousness of the man, being apparent, transformed and distorted him. And yet I cannot say truly; to me Mind and Life and Death remain a trinity of mystery; only love is clear.

Marguerite and I have been wedded long. We live with Beckwith in that old castle-like house in New Orleans, where I once lay healing of my hurts. From watching our lives, Beckwith came to believe in marriage as a means of happiness. As a firm of physicians I confess that he now leaves much of the work to me; but I forgive him; I am far younger than he.

My mother recovered and was long a nurse in the hospital we have in charge; even after she married Dr. Beckwith, she persisted in the work. We sold Magnolia Place long ago. Sam and Abbie were married and remain our faithful servants. Deputy Hamlin, husband of Sally Pearson and three times sheriff of his county, comes once each year to visit us. The one encomium he always delivers when he enters our door is this:

"Well, you alls 'pears to be comin' on right peart!"

The end.

* * *

Young Mrs. Dillham—Arthur, won't it be grand when women vote? You and I can go to the polls together.

Mr. Dillham—But what if the election happens to fall on bargain day?

* * *

Curing Sick Pearls.

Unlike other gems, pearls will sicken and change, and entirely lose their luster, if not properly cared for, and once their luster is gone, it is next to impossible to bring it back. Yet workmen in India have ways mysterious and strange of doctoring pearls—secrets that have been handed down for untold generations from father to son, tricks of the trade, jealously and successfully guarded. Among their class superstitions, of which there are many, is the firm belief that when worn by dark-skinned persons a pearl will never lose its luster, since from them it can absorb more vitality than from those of fairer skin.

It is a well-known fact that some people cannot wear pearls at all. Some elements in their physical makeup causes the gems to turn dark or a dull yellowish white; but let another person wear them, and their luster soon returns. As an illustration of this, there is in London a woman of social distinction whose pearls are famous and almost beyond price. Every year she has to send them away to be worn by a woman who, she has found, "agrees" with them so well that in a marvelously short time their original beauty is restored. Their owner says that with her they will last not more than two months; after that they begin noticeably to change.

* * *

Imaginary Ailments.

Among the papers left behind him by a German physician, who died a short time ago, is one containing notes of certain conclusions he had arrived at during a professional experience of more than forty years. In one of these notes he expresses an opinion that at least a third of the illness of the patients who sought his advice was purely imaginary. He found it not only against his own interests, but also against that of the self-supposed sufferer, to destroy the illusion by informing them that there really was no cause of anxiety. Ill health was to them a matter of almost vital importance; to destroy the pleasing belief that they possessed this blessing was an absolute cruelty. In a few instances in which he broke to them the terrible truth that they were quite well, he found that the result was genuine illness. For the patient's all interest in life departed with their favorite occupation of nursing themselves, and their health became seriously affected by nervous depression. He also found that, as a rule, weakly persons live longer than strong ones. Without going so far as to say that the most enduring lives are those rejected by the insurance offices, he thought, nevertheless, that persons with some chronic malady more often attain longevity than those in whom no trace of disease can be detected.

* * *

A Considerate Lady.

The minister called at the house of Mr. Snagwell the other day.

"You are very comfortably situated," said he to the Christian wife and mother. "Your little place is almost self-sustaining; but, sister, where are all of your chickens? When last here, I noticed flocks of them in the yard."

"Yes," replied the Christian lady, "we raised a great many, but they became so troublesome to our neighbors that, rather than give offense, we sold them."

"Very considerate, I am sure."

"Oh, I cannot bear to be looked upon as an imposition and——"

"Ma!" called young Snagwell.

"Yes, son."

"Did you sell the chickens 'cause they was trouble?"

"Yes, son, run along now."

"No, you didn't, 'cause I heard you tell pap that the chickens all had the cholera, an' that he'd better take 'em down an' sell 'em before they all died."

The good lady imagined that the minister was not so cordial when he took his leave, and shortly afterward the boy had reason to believe that the mercury had gained an altitude of several inches.

* * *

Road to Fame.

It was Mme. Highnote's first appearance, and she was on her trial trill. The audience sat spellbound. First came a cadenza, and then—the high C. Would she do it? Mme. Highnote thought she wouldn't.

She was just about to attempt the note when a little brown mouse ran across the footlights. The diva shrieked, gathered up her skirts and ran.

Once in her dressingroom she buried her face in her hands and sobbed.

"My prospects are forever blighted," she moaned.

At that moment there came a feverish knock at the door. It was the manager's assistant.

"The manager," he exclaimed, "wants to know whether you ran away from the curtain because you were ill?"

"No. I am well. I was only——"

"And he wants me to tell you that that high C you let out at the end was the finest he had heard for years, and the audience is crazy over you. You must give an encore."

"I can't—I can't," wailed the prima donna; "not unless you get another mouse."

* * *

A "Corpse" Contradicts.

Few people have the delightful privilege of reading their own obituary notices. A London newspaper once announced the death of the eminent playwright and humorist, W. S. Gilbert. The next day the editor received a note from the "corpse" to this effect:

"Though I am very loath to spoil sport, common candor compels me to admit that I am still alive."

Perhaps one might link with that the story of the wealthy but ignorant woman who once opened once to be Mr. Gilbert's neighbor at dinner. She babbled for some time about music and musicians, with the idea of impressing him with her "culture."

"And what about Bache?" she asked. "Is he composing now?"

"No, ma'am," was the tart reply; "he is decomposing!"

* * *

Scissors in Demand.

The incident here recorded happened in the far West. A man entered a barber's shop and asked for a hair cut.

"Yes, sir. Won't keep you long; sit down a minute," said the barber.

The stranger took a seat, and waited patiently while many weary minutes passed away.

"How much longer are you going to keep me waiting?" he asked at last.

"I'm waiting for my boy," replied the barber. "Ah, here he is! Jimmy, run across to the office of the Plugtown Boomerang and tell the editor that if he's finished editing, I should like my scissors. I've got to cut this gentleman's hair."

* * *

Another Colonel.

"We Americans," said Simeon Ford, the famous after-dinner speaker, at a banquet, "are justly famous for our titles.

"I used to think that the finest of all our titles was that of Col. Abraham Hardgrass, who told a questioner that he was neither a regular nor a volunteer colonel, but a colonel by marriage, having wedded the widow of Col. Harrison Pike of Pink Creek.

"But I came across the other day a still better colonel than this. He was rather seedy and, handing me a soiled visiting card, he asked me in a low voice if I could lend him two dollars.

"I glanced at his card. It was inscribed 'Col. William Melcher Dana.'

"'You are, I presume,' I said, 'a colonel in the army?'

"'Yes, sir,' said he.

"'Regular or Salvation?' I asked.

"'Neither, sir,' he answered. 'Army of the unemployed.'"

* * *

Convincing Proof.

A man who killed his wife was acquitted by the jury on the ground of insanity.

"What in the world made you reach such a verdict?" one of the jurymen was asked some days afterward. "He's no more crazy than I am. Why, his counsel didn't even enter a plea of insanity."

"I know all that," said the juryman coolly; "but he's insane, all the same; a brainless, incurable idiot. He has been known to rock a boat when out sailing with young ladies, and a few nights before he killed his wife he yelled fire in a crowded theater. D'ye want more proof?"

"No, that's convincing enough."

Absent Minded.

There was an absent minded bishop in western Ontario. On a certain occasion he was traveling on a train and found when the conductor approached him that he had forgotten where he was to go. The conductor suggested that he telegraph from the next station and find out his destination. It was before the days of long distance telephones, and the bishop telegraphed his wife from the first station: "Where was I going?" He was answered at the following station: "Exeter; be sure to get off there." The bishop then beamed at the anxious conductor and remarked placidly: "These little difficulties always turn out satisfactorily."

* * *

Plain Scotch.

Two Scotchmen staying at a hotel in London discovered that the washstand in their bedroom was minus soap. After ringing the bell an attendant appeared and asked their wishes. "Sen' up sape, lad—a wee bit sape, quick!" exclaimed one of the Caledonians. The attendant gazed open mouthed at the two men, muttering: "They ain't French, nor Germans, nor yet Spanish. What can they want?" The Scot became angry. "Man," he thundered, "can you no' understan' plain Scotch?" The attendant promptly withdrew and returned with a bottle and two glasses.

* * *

Delicately Put.

"Well, Uncle Stewart, how did you like my sermon yesterday?" asked the young preacher after his first sermon on the circuit.

"Well, you see, parson," was the slow response, "I haven't a fair chance at them sermons you fellers preach."

"Why, how is that, uncle?" the beginner wanted to know.

"It's this way; I'm an old man now, an' have to set purty well back by th' stove; an' there's old Miss Potter, n' widow Brown, n' the Nolen girls, n' Crissy Reeder, n' all the rest a setting in front of me, n' what gits down to me is purty poor stuff, parson, purty poor stuff."

* * *

Ma Farmhoam—My, Seth, but ain't that last couple that came lovely young people?

Pa Farmhoam—Land sakes, yes; they hardly eat anything.

* * *

An Unfair Advantage.

Clara—You say Fred has been cruelly deceived by the young widow. Did she lead him on to believe that she loved him, then throw him over.

Maude—Mercy, no! She led him to believe that she didn't care a rap for him, then, when he carelessly proposed, accepted him on the spot.

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Chicago Ledger

Entered as second-class matter June 25, 1895, at the postoffice at Chicago, Illinois, under act of March 3, 1879.

Published Every Saturday

By W. D. BOYCE CO., CHICAGO, ILL.

500 Dearborn Avenue.

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Single subscriptions to The Chicago Ledger by mail $1.00 a year, 50 cents for six months, in advance. Remittances should be made by Bank Draft, Registered Letter, Postoffice or Express Money Order, payable to The Chicago Ledger. Subscription price in Canada $1.50 a year. We do not send receipts for money paid on subscriptions; the address tab on your paper shows the date to which your subscription is paid.

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GENTLE JABS.

Fortunately the grand old declaration is safe and sane.

There is less nerve strain in approaching the sane Fourth.

Banish the dynamite cracker before it begins its criminal career.

Hurrah for the kind of Fourth that lets you live to tell about it!

Queer thing about necessity. It is the mother of invention and the father of toil.

The average man would rather be a captain of industry than an army general.

A popular man is one who is liberal with his money and stingy with his advice.

Getting their fortunes told is but an innocent way some women have of gambling.

Many a man's education consists of being loaded to the muzzle with worthless ammunition.

Everything comes to him who waits—including the woman who said she'd be ready in a minute.

How a giddy girl does enjoy making a man keep on trying to kiss her when she won't let him.

It's a good thing for a man to bump up against the proof of his own unimportance occasionally.

A silly woman may manage a man of sense, but no sensible man has ever succeeded in managing a silly woman.

There may be just as good fish in the sea as ever were caught, but a fish that is caught is worth two in the sea.

The woman who refused to marry a man because he didn't ask her never has any use for the woman he does marry.

Breaking precedents by means of a sane celebration makes a much more subdued and refined noise than does the dynamite cracker.

Maybe some well-meaning ones who were slightly mixed in their dates will wake up to the fact that it is not the anniversary of the invention of the firecracker that we are celebrating.

It costs the United States about $20,000,000 to celebrate the Fourth of July, and there are at least 500 people hurt and 100 killed every time. The whole thing is for the small boy, but he wakes up on the morning of the 5th and wonders whether its worth the money. We gained our independence of course, but what good does that do to the boy with all his hair singed off?

UNSTABILITY.

The woodsman thinks of the palace fine,
Where the perfumed air is warm,
And the lights where the revelers jest and dine,
Afar from all thought of storm.

And the townsman dreams of the whispering trees
And the light of the stars on high,
And the buoyant thrill of the restless breeze
As it sweeps from the open sky.

No matter where you may chance to be
You yearn for another goal,
For man is a drop in the mighty sea,
Whose tides he can ne'er control.

THE FOURTH IN PARIS.

The French Fourth of July is July 14, the French Declaration of Independence dating from the destruction of the Bastile.

The Bastile, as many of you know, was that famous prison in Paris which to the French people was the symbol of the grievous wrongs of many centuries. Here people were often confined without knowing of what they were accused or who were their accusers. Often they were simply forgotten and lived and died there. French history is filled with stories of the Bastile. Many of you have doubtless read of Pelisson and his spider, that story of patient endurance. When the Bastile was captured by the people during the French Revolution, and its doors were opened, men who were imprisoned young came forth old. They had been long supposed to be dead, and their friends were gone and scattered.

It is not surprising that the people believed that their liberties could not be safe until the Bastile was destroyed, and that they razed it to the ground. The stones were afterward consecrated to the beautiful service of the Pont de la Concorde, one of the most noted bridges of the Seine. The site of the Bastile is now marked by the lofty Column of July on whose summit stands the gilded figure of Liberty, bearing a torch in one hand and in the other a broken chain.

It is not strange that the French Republic has regularly since then celebrated this great day in its history, and even at the risk of seeming very unpatriotic one might think the French have a much more fitting way of celebrating their freedom. By day Paris is alive with the tremulous color of floating flags. By night the city is ablaze with light. The Seine gleams like a rainbow-hued ribbon with reflections from the bridges, the little boats leaving trails of light behind them, and yellow lanterns that hang like great golden oranges from the trees on its banks. The palace and gardens of the Trocadero rise out of the darkness like a scene of enchantment from the "Arabian Nights." From the Champ de Mars opposite, hundreds of thousands of people are gathered to see it, and to enjoy the magnificent fireworks, the castles and fountains and gardens—golden visions, that gleam for a moment and pass away.

But the most interesting part of the fete is that of the children to whom the afternoon belongs. The different aron-dissements, or, as we would say, the different wards, each arranges its own program, which usually consists of games and prizes. The Rue Petit Jean is a little street running out of the Boulevard de Clichy, and bumps its head, so to speak, against a white stone where stands a small shrine. Probably suggested by the shrine, the committee has placed the bust of Liberty on a pedestal in front, and surrounded it with the tri-color. The committee is chiefly—a tall, thin man, with a very red face, which gets redder and redder through chasing the half-grown boys, who, of whatever nation, have a fashion of becoming too prominent for the committeemen on such exciting occasions.

Midway down the street stands a tall pole in the middle of a ring of sawdust. At the top is a great cedar wreath, and from this hang boxes of chocolate, bologna sausages done up in silver paper, a long "flute" of bread, a doll, cases of pencils, gleaming pocketknife. At the foot is a group of eager-eyed children, waiting none too patiently for the fun to begin and outside their mothers, in white caps are as eager as the children.

The pole is called the Mat de Cocagne; in other words, the Cockney Mast. It has been well oiled, and the trophies above are for those who can reach and cut them from the wreath.

Long beforehand the competitors were chosen and their names written on the list. As each one's turn comes, his name is called, and a pair of scissors on a white string is hung around his neck, as solemnly as if he were being invested with the Order of the Golden Fleece. For a long time the scissors are not needed. Finally the tiniest boy of all mounts higher and higher, the children shout, the women set up a tremendous cackle and the white caps nod. He is almost in reach. He slips back. He gains again. His little face is purple with effort. The crowd gets more and more excited. The air is rent with ejaculations. He is slowly losing ground. Then, relaxing his hold, he slides, swiftly down, the multitude with one groan coming down, as it were, with him.

Finally a large boy reaches the top amid great shouts and cuts off the longest sausage. The other boys evidently believe there is some virture in his coat, and he good-naturedly lends it to each new aspirant. Others fill their pockets with sawdust, which they scatter on their legs on the journey upward to give them better purchase.

At last the time is up and the crowd changes its place in front of the bust of Liberty where the Jeu de Bouzies is to take place. This is the trial of the little girls who are all becurled and cleanpinafored for the occasion. Parallel lines of benches, on which the mothers sit, mark off a course which ends at a table covered with little petticoats, aprons, collars and cuffs, ribbons and laces. The girls are arranged according to their ages, the little ones coming first. Into each little tot's hand a lighted candle is placed.

At the signal they start and run, and the first one at the goal with her candle still lighted is the winner. Away they go toddling over the stones. The timid ones stop to try and shield their lights, and the bolder ones dash away, their candles apparently out; but when they stop, red-faced and breathless, before the committee now behind the table, the light flares up as if it, too, had been playing a little game. It is a pretty sport, and the pile of prizes on the table rapidly grows less.

For the larger girls there is still the Jeu de Ciseaux, in which the prizes are more inspiring. A string is tied across the narrow street. A foot apart hang other strings attached to this, to the ends of which are tied work baskets, fans, sewing boxes, silk aprons and pieces of humble finery. The girls are blindfolded, one by one, and given a pair of scissors. They walk slowly and with meditative tread toward the rope, and, holding out the scissors, endeavor to cut one of the threads. If they succeed, the prize which it holds is theirs. If they fail, they contribute to the hilarious merriment of the occasion.

It is pleasant to see how good natured everybody is, and how well the unfortunates take their defeat.

Solicitor—Can't you contribute something to a home that's about to be started for indigent poets?

Editor—Sure! If you'll hang around for a few minutes I'll give you all the poets that come in.

Yawning.

A good, wide open mouthed yawn is a thing not to be despised. Of course, if it is indulged in in the privacy of your own room so much the better, but, wherever taken, it's a splendid thing for the whole body. A yawn is nature's demand for rest. Some people think they yawn only because they are sleepy, but that is not so. They may be sleepy also, but that is not the real cause of the yawning. They are sleepy because they are tired. So take this advice. Whenever you feel like yawning yawn Don't try to suppress it, and if you are where you can stretch at the same time so much the better. This is nature's way of stretching and relaxing the muscles. Even if you do not feel like yawning there is nothing that will rest you so quickly as to sit straight back in a chair, lift the feet from the floor, push them out in front of you as far as they will go, stretch the arms, put the head back, open the mouth wide and make yourself yawn.

An Eskimo Heiress.

Mary Coonie, a full blooded Eskimo, reputed to be worth several million dollars, is the richest woman north of the Arctic Circle. She can neither read nor write, but employs a shrewd young Englishman, a graduate of Oxford, as her secretary. She is a woman of much business ability. Her wealth comes from mining lands, she having a large holding. Among her possessions are 2,000 reindeer. She has little opportunity to spend money, and her one extravagance is dress. Despite her great wealth she has little desire to travel and see the world.

Power of Little Seed.

In the city of Hanover, in Germany, is an old, neglected graveyard. Near the entrance is a tomb in which lie the remains of a lady who belonged to the old nobility, and who was buried there about the middle of the last century. The tomb is covered with massive blocks of stone. On one of the stones, besides the name of the lady and the date of her death, there are these words:

"This grave, bought for all my time, must never be opened."

But there are mightier forces than heavy stones and iron clamps. A little seed found lodging in the crevice between two of the stones. It took root and grew, until now there is an immense birch tree waving its graceful limbs over the tomb. Its roots went through the grave and the trunk lifted the great stones and broke the iron clamps; and the little seed had opened the grave, for its power was greater than the stone and the iron!

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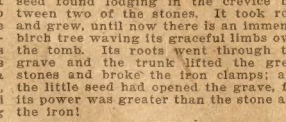

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Little Stories

An Equivocal Answer.

The blushing girl buttonholed her flushed fiance.

"Well, Egbert," she anxiously murmured, "did pap give his consent?"

Egbert drew himself up stiffly.

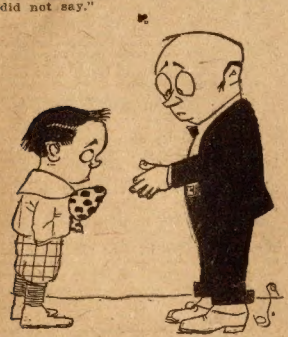
"He did not commit himself either way," he responded.

"Then—are we or aren't we engaged, Egby?"

"I do not know," answered Egby, still stiffly.

"But—what happened?"

"This," said Egby, more stiffly than ever. "I went in and said: 'Sir, I wish to marry your daughter. Have I your consent??' He turned and looked sternly at me a minute. Then he grew red in the face, then he grabbed me, then he lifted me up, then he threw me over the banisters. But whether he is in favor of our engagement or not, Ethelbrite, he did not say."



Little Willie—Say, papa, give me a phonograph on my birthday.

Papa—No; you will disturb me very much if I do.

Little Willie—No, sir. I'll only play it when you're asleep, sir.

The Washerwoman's Blunder

A young man, about to attend a masquerade party in Boston, had secured a neat costume, and it was in a parcel on his bureau. The young lady who occupied a room below his had a parcel similar in outward appearance, which her washerwoman was to call for, as was her weekly habit. The washerwoman entered the wrong room of the boarding house, and took the young man's parcel.

Some hours afterward the young lady was amazed to find her parcel still on the bureau. The young man was astonished to find his parcel gone. The young man and the young woman compared notes, and at the close of their conference they journeyed to the washerwoman's abode, some miles out of town. They pounded the door, but got no response. At length they walked around to the back door, and there in the yard they saw, to their horror, the costume suspended from a clothesline, having been washed and hung out to dry. It had lost its original brightness, and not only this, but its original size. It had been intended for a man six feet high, and had shrunk in the wash till it wouldn't go on a small boy. The colors had run together, and plumes and spangles were in the last stages of dilapidation from contact with the scrubbing board. An exclamation that was almost an oath burst from the young man's lips, but just at that moment the washerwoman appeared in the door.

"Oh, what did you do it for? Didn't you know better? What did you think I could do with those things?" exclaimed the young lady.

"Now, you don't say?" was the reply. "Ain't they yourn? I thought they was the queerest-looking underclothes I ever did see, but you can't tell nothing about fashions nowadays."

On a Business Basis.

"Hah!" exclaimed the proud old banker as he turned and looked over his glasses at the young man who had been admitted to the inner sanctum. "I suppose you have come to ask me for permission to marry my daughter? Well, you can't have her. I've thought the matter over and I am convinced that you are not the kind of chap I'd want for a son-in-law. You're a natural-born politician and I have no use for politicians. You're always running for something. A man who is always doing that can't devote proper attention to his family. I've spoken plainly to you, sir, because I wish you to understand my position in this matter. I don't wish to argue with you about it. You may consider it settled."

"Thank you for your frankness in pointing out my faults as a family man; but I did not come primarily to ask you for your daughter, although I had an idea that we might discuss that matter later. What I wished to say this morning was that I have just been elected treasurer of the biggest and richest club in this city, and that I thought of keeping the funds in your bank. But perhaps—"

"Say, my boy, have you an engagement for luncheon? Come, you must go with me. I have wanted for some time to have a good, long, quiet talk with you. I'm interested in your career, and I think we both are interested in—in—some one else. Will you do me the honor?"

"Thank you. I have another engagement, but I'll break it."

Presence of Mind.

A lady had issued invitations for a party of twelve, and on the morning of the appointed day, when conferring with the footman, she discovered that one of the twelve silver shells in which oysters were to be served had been misplaced.

Rigid search for the missing article having proved unavailing, the lady decided that, sooner than give up that particular course, she would simply decline oysters when they were handed to her, and so the eleven shells would be sufficient.

It happened, that when the oysters were served at dinner, the hostess was engaged in a very animated conversation with one or two of her neighbors, and, forgetting her determination, took the shell of oysters and set it before herself.

If the servant's heart fell in consternation at this, he gave no external sign of it; but, speaking in tones distinct, though low, said respectfully:

"Excuse me, madam, but you said I was to remind you that the doctor forbade your eating oysters."

Percy—Lend me a five, old chap, and I'll be everlastingly indebted to you.

Reggie—That's just what I'm afraid of, old fellow.

A Real One.

"I was once retained in a case in a down State village where I had known most of the inhabitants ever since I was a child," says Attorney George B. Harris. "In examining some of the witnesses I forgot myself and used their given names. The judge interrupted me.

"'Mr. Harris,' he said, 'I believe it would be more dignified to address these witnesses by their surnames.'

"I apologized to the court and reformed—temporarily. A little later, an awkward, slovenly farmer was called to the stand. I was well acquainted with the chap—so was everybody else in the room.

"'Now, Rube,' I began.

"Wait a moment,' called the judge. He leaned over and took a good look at the witness. Then he turned to me and added:

"'You may proceed, sir. I see no reason why the witness should not be called Rube.'"

Long Chase.

A farmer was chasing an escaped pig along the highroad. The animal was putting him far to the rear. A neighbor, passing in a buggy, came to a stop, turned to watch the pursuit, roaring with laughter. "Don't you want to borrow my horse and buggy?" he cried.

The farmer seemed incensed by this pleasantry and drew himself up as if to make an angry reply. But he thought better of it. Over his face crept a look of stolid good nature. He perched on the fence and kicked the dust from his boots.

"It's a powerful tiring race," he began in a tone that invited friendly conversation.

"Well, I guess it is. You'd better wait and take a train and head him off at some way station during the night."

"He's still falling farther behind me," drawled the farmer. "But I'm afraid he'e begun to get his second wind. Still I don't phink he can catch me, do you?"

"Behind you! Catch you? Well, hardly, going that way."

"That's what I think. You see, this is one of them round-the-world races that automobilists talk about. He's a whole lap behind me, except for the few rods that he seems to be ahead of me. All that surprises me is the way he can keep the trail, being so far behind."

"Oh, there, I see he's losing it now—going through that gap into a potato patch. I want to be fair, so if you'll excuse me, I'll run down and lap him, and steer him right."

Fun Under Fire.

"One of the characteristics of my old comrade, Amos Stillman, Co. A, 23d Mass. volunteers, was bravery in actual fighting service," said the old soldier. "Another characteristic was a sense of humor which stood him in good stead even in the face of danger, and contributed not a little to the gaiety of his comrades.

"At the battle of Cold Harbor, just before making the charge and while under the confederate fire, our corporal, who was over six feet tall and scarcely bigger round than a gun barrel, became excited as the enemy's bullets plowed up the earth about him.

"'What kind of a place is this to keep a man in?' he demanded. 'Absolutely without protection!'

"He had no more than spoken when private Stillman stuck his gunrod in the ground.

"'Here, corporal,' said he, 'get behind this.'"

Mother Might Detect It.

She and her husband were on their wedding trip, and they had just reached Philadelphia. In the station she drew him in the direction of the telegraph office.

"I promised mother I'd wire her when we got here," she said, "and where we are going next."

"All right," the bridegroom murmured, reaching for a telegraph blank and scribbling hurriedly. "How's this?"

The bride took the paper and read it slowly.

"Are in Philadelphia. Bellevue-Stratford. Atlantic City on Monday. Will write.—Ethel."

"That's fine," she applauded him. "You make them up beautifully. I never could."—She reached for a pen and another sheet of paper.

"I must copy it now," she explained. "We could never send it this way. You see, mother knows that isn't my writing."

Singing Mountains.

In certain parts of the world are mountains and hills which are said by the natives to sing. In the Pyrenees certain cliffs emit plaintive sounds resembling the strains of a harp. Two other cliffs in the same chain are called the "snorers." When the wind is in the southwest they send forth a peculiar sound not altogether musical.

The only time the average man is willing to admit that he is one of the common people is when he is running for office.

Teacher—Now, Jacob, tell me what a philosopher is?

Jacob—Shucks, teechur, it's one uv dem guys wot rides a "philosopede."

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If your druggist cannot supply you, send 50 cents to R. P. HALL & CO., Nashua, N. H.

"Did she marry well?"
"Yes, indeed! She had a trip all over Europe before her divorce."

Going It Too Fast.

Guest—Now I'll take some ice cream to top off with, three flavors.
Waiter—Your bill is seventy-five cents already, sir.
Guest—What of that?
Waiter—Why, you see, sir, mixed ice cream is twenty cents, and you'll probably gave me a dollar to pay the check, and that'll leave only five cents for me.

TWENTY-SIX EASIER THAN ONE.

The letters of the alphabet
We never in our lives forget;
But strange to say, our memories fail
When wife gives us one to mail.

HARD LUCK.

I looked into the azure eyes
Of her I sought to win,
In deep endeavor to surmise
My fond heart's fate therein.

And searching with a lover's wit
Those orbs of heaven's hue,
My prospects seemed, I must admit,
To be exceeding blue.

Touchy.

Garrulous Barber—As the sayin' goes, 'There's always room at the top.'
Sensitive Customer—How dare you refer to my baldness!

TICKLISH

THE PRETENDER.

"Pretend I am the lightsome breeze,
And you the shimmering sea;
That I am, too, yon tossing yacht,
And you the shore," said he.
The lightsome breeze it kissed the sea,
The yacht it hugged the shore.
The sweet maid saw; a radiant flush
Her cheek and brow spread o'er.
Her lips part in a witching smile,
Her eyes a love glance send
To his, and nestling close she sighs
And murmurs, "I'll pretend."

An Appalling Excuse.

"This is the fifth time you have been brought before me this term," said the judge, frowning severely upon the prisoner at the bar.
"Yes, your honor," said the prisoner, "You know a man is judged by the company he keeps and I like to be seen talkin' to your honor for the sake of me credit."
"All right," said the judge. "Officer, take this man over to the island and tell them to give him a credit of thirty days."

Had an Engagement.

Railroad Superintendent (climbing onto the engine)—That bridge ahead is very weak, but by putting on all steam I think the train can pass it.
Engineer—All right; but if I were in your place, I'd take a seat in the last car.
Superintendent—I? Oh, I'm going to get off.

Some Disturbance.

"What's the matter, little boy? It sounds as though some one was being killed in your house."
"Oh, that's only pa," replied the small boy. "He's got a cold and ma is trying to put a mustard plaster on him."

Knew How to Keep a Hotel.

Guest—I'd soon starve here.
Proprietor (country hotel)—There's plenty to eat.
"Perhaps so, but those waiter girls of yours don't attend to me."
"They don't. Well, that's easily fixed here's some wax."
"What good is that?"
"Put it on your mustache, of course, and curl the ends. You've got too much of a married look."

Social Triumphs.

Mrs. Frost—And was you daughter's experience as a hospital nurse a success?
Mrs. Snow—Yes, indeed. She was at the hospital only two days before they dismissed her, but in those forty-eight hours she had met six perfectly lovely young doctors.—Puck.

How It Happened.

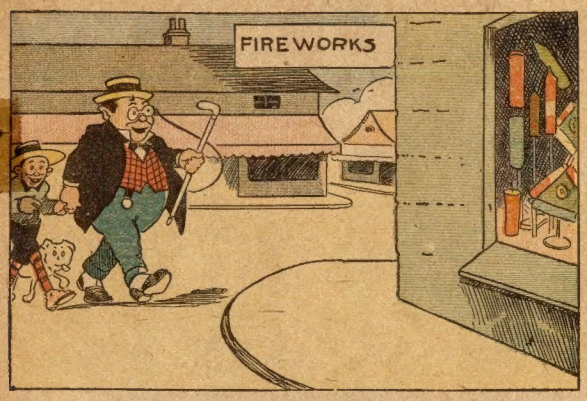
"How did you get that spring overcoat?"
"Had a sure tip on a horserace."
"I never knew one of those sure tips to pan out."
"Neither did I. So I didn't play it. Put the money into this overcoat instead."

Self-Defense.

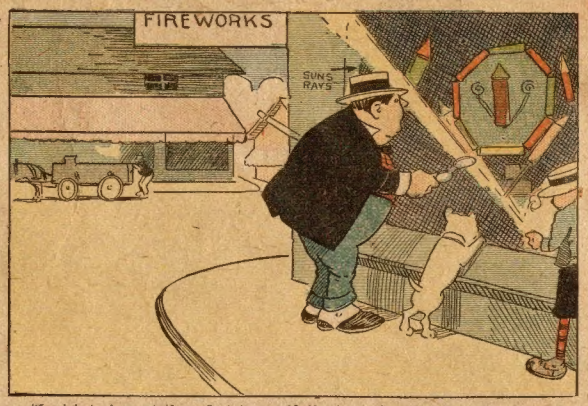
Piano Manufacturer (hotly)—Why didn't you show off that piano, instead of making such horrible noises on it?
Salesman (apologetically)—Those ladies live next door to me, and I was afraid they'd buy.

A Serial Story.

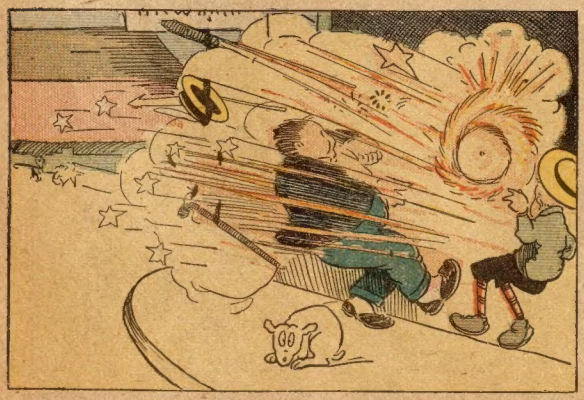
The search for happiness and bliss
Has furnished many a novel's text.
Such search in this life's vain; it is
"To be continued in our next."



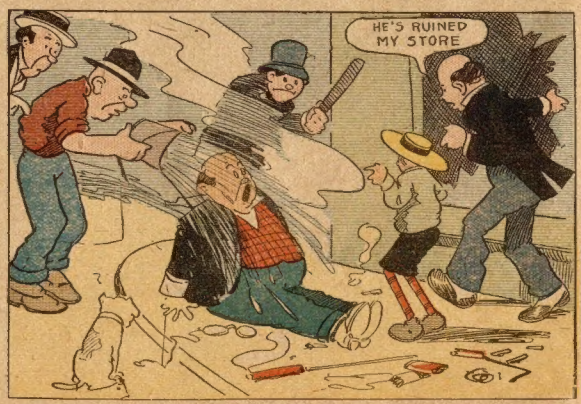
Mr. Biffbingle—Yes, my son, you may have some fireworks, but——



"I wish to inspect them first to see if they're safe. Ha, ha! See how the sunlight focuses through my eyeglass?"



(Flash! Fizz! Boom!) "Good gracious! The fireworks are exploding! Run! Run!



"Ugh! Glug! Confound you sir! I did not do it on purpose! It was purely an accident!"

TACKLES

A Cool Place.

Mr. Citimann—I presume it is hot in the country as well as in the city, this weather.

Mr. Suburb—Nonsense! It's cool, delightfully cool, where I live. Why, I've got a stove in my sleeping room.

"Good gracious! Much of a fire in it?"

"N-o; no fire in it."

What It Means.

Mr. Rural—If there ain't no objection, me and my family will stop in here an' take a rest. I see you've got a sign, 'Family Entrance,' over y'r door.

Lounger—If you wasn't from Squedunk or some such town, you'd know that that there sign means that this ain't no place fer families to enter.

The Annual Question.

"Well, Hawkins, old man," said Witherbee, "has your wife decided where she will spend the summer?"

"Yep," said Hawkins. "She's going abroad."

"So? And how about you?"

"Well, I don't know yet," sighed Hawkins. "I haven't decided whether to stay in town or go into bankruptcy."

Supply and Demand.

Peddler—Any tins, ma'am?

Housekeeper (indignantly)—Those tins you sold me last week have all gone to pieces.

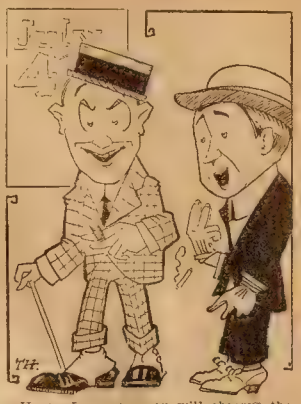
Peddler—Yes'm. I knew you'd want some more by this time.

Law and Lawyers.

Richmann—I have decided to make no will.

Lawyer—Then the law will divide your estate.

Richmann—Well, that is better than letting the lawyers divide it.



Hook—I suppose you will observe the Fourth of July?

Cook—Observe it! Of course I will. I don't expect to be able to notice anything else.

A Friend in Need.

Jinks—Hello! howdy do, Blinks? Say, old fellow, come home and take tea with me."

Blinks—Really, I am scarcely presentable in these—

Jinks—Bother the clothes! That's all right. Come right along. My wife and I value people at their true worth; we don't go by their tailor's bills. Come right along.

Sam Jinks (half an hour later)—Ah, here we are. My dear, allow me to present my friend Mr. Blinks. Mr. Blinks, Mrs. Jinks. By the way, my dear, those things you told me to order I forgot all about until too late to get into the store.

Mrs. Jinks (aghast)—What! Forgot? Um—um—er—it's of no consequence at all, my dear, not the least. Happy to make your acquaintance, Mr. Blinks. What delightful weather we are having. Please excuse me one moment.

Jinks (in a whisper, after Mrs. J. has disappeared)—Worked like a charm.

Blinks—What worked?

Jinks—She didn't dare say a word about my forgetting those things with company present. That's why I brought you.

Faults vs. Virtues.

Mr. Suburb—Women are a perfect nuisance to sit behind on a railroad train. They are bound to have the window up.

Mr. Citiman—Yes, but they are a perfect blessing to walk behind on the street. They don't smoke.

Contaminated.

Mr. Bilkins (a seaside cottager)—I notice you always go to a private bathing establishment. Why don't you bathe in the ocean?

Mrs. Bilkins—The ocean? Goodness me! Why, all those hotel boarders bathe in it.

She Tells Him.

"Does your wife ask you for things she knows you cannot afford?"

"She hasn't asked me for a thing since we were married."

"Great! How do you manage it?"

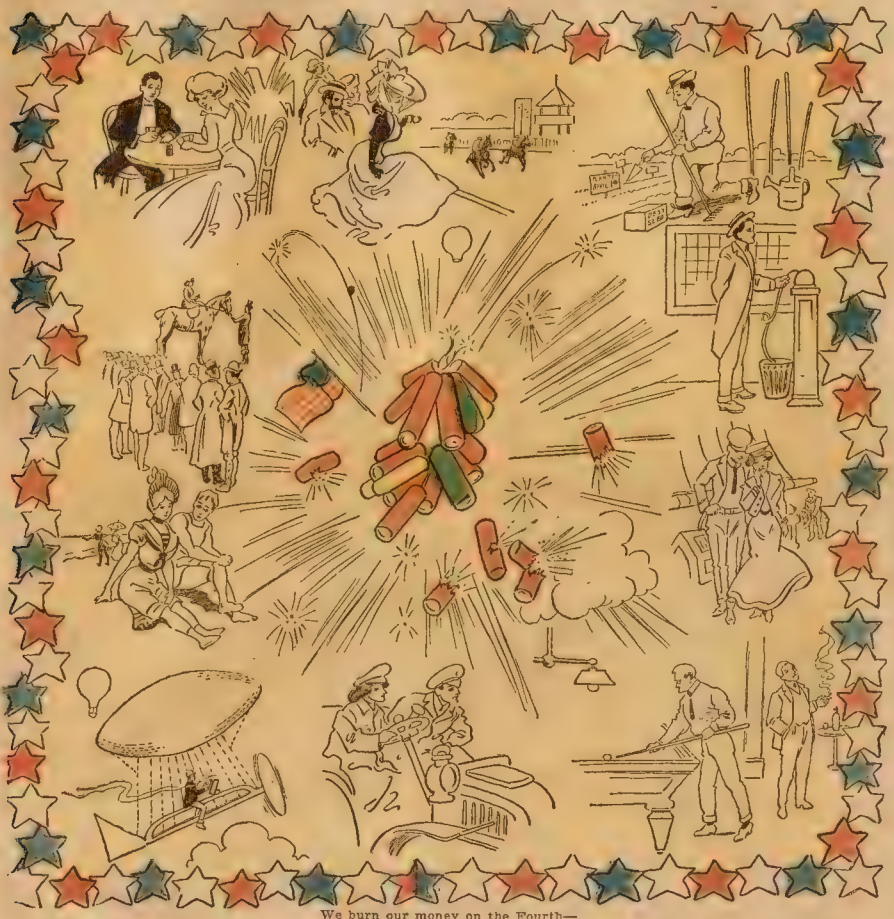
"When she wants a thing she does not ask me; she tells me."

Same Old Things.

"I am disappointed in this seed catalogue."

"As to how?"

"I don't see any improvement to beets or tomatoes. These look like 1910 models."



We burn our money on the Fourth—
But then the year is full of days
On which without exerting much
We burn our money other ways.

ON EITHER SIDE.

They linger at the garden gate—
The moon is bright, the hour is late;
They laugh and talk in accents low,
And so they did an hour ago.
Why do they loiter on the scene?
The garden gate is closed between.
But still they linger, still they wait
On either side the garden gate—
And yet, it cannot be denied,
There's much to say on either side.

She Had Him.

A young man, who had not been married long remarked at the dinner table the other day:

"My dear, I wish you could make bread such as mother used to make."

The bride smiled and answered in a voice that did not tremble:

"Well, dear, I wish you could make the dough that father used to make."

Of More Importance.

Betty may not be very worldly wise, but she is practical. She knows enough to take a common sense view of things sentimental as well as material. So, when she listened to the proposal of the young man she is fond of, she couldn't help saying what she did.

"If you reject me, Betty, dear," he urged, in a final appeal, "I shall never, never love another. It will be the end."

"And if I accept," she asked, "does the same thing hold good?"

Had Twins Before.

Friend—Considering that this is your third baby. I don't see why you should be so exuberantly happy over it.

Young Father (joyously)—Y-e-s, but it's only one this time.

Result of Position.

"What a pecuHar gait your friend Hobbles has."

"That's because he is the sort of man who is always on the fence."

Not the Same.

Miss Woodby—So Mr. Smart said he considered me very witty, eh?

Miss Know—Not exactly. He said he had to laugh every time he saw you.

Called Back.

"A good wife is Heaven's greatest gift to man and the rarest gem the earth holds," remarked Mr. Jarphly the other evening. "She is his joy, his inspiration, and his very soul. Through her he learns to reach the pure and true, and her loving hands lead him softly over the rough places. She is—"

"Jeremiah," said Mrs. Jarphly solemnly. "Jeremiah, what wickedness have you been up to now?"

Source of Supply.

"This neighborhood is building up very rapidly."

"Yes," replied the artless, freckle faced lad. "If they keep selling lots and taking down real estate signs I don't know what our family is going to do for wood next winter."

Successful.

"Has Perry ever done anything to add to the gayety of nations?"

"Yes. He tries to speank French, German and Italian when he is in those countries."

Miss City—What are you doing?

Hiram Hydidlediddle—I'm pruning this tree.

Miss City—You can't fool me; that's an apple tree.

MADELINE DARE'S VENGEANCE,

OR, THE UNWRITTEN LAW.

BY WELDON J. COBB.

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Begun in No. 21, May 27. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, or our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER XVIII.

AT THE BAR.

"PRISONER at the bar, you are arraigned on the charge of wilful murder. What say you—guilty or not guilty."

"Guilty."

A stir, a thrill, a shock pervaded the crowded courtroom. Even the dignified white-haired judge was moved from his customary calm. The jurymen rustled in their seats. A deathlike hush pervaded the place.

It was an impressive scene—a beautiful woman on trial for murder. She sat in a statuesque pose, with white face set in a mask of utter immobility. The world all against her, publicly acknowledging the dreadful charge against her, by that act and word she seemed to isolate and doom herself.

Now she arose in her seat. Like some tragic queen Madeline Dare faced the breathless throng.

"To simplify matters, your honor," she said in a clear, incisive tone, devoid of the least token of care or fear, "I wish to say that calmly, wilfully and in my right mind I shot down and killed Cyril Dare. I wish further to say that under the circumstances I would repeat the act."

"Do you realize the peril, the penalty of this uncalled-for admission?" cried the august judge, stirred out of himself by the unusual statement.

"I am prepared for the worst," calmly responded the accused. "There is no necessity of wasting your time. I am guilty—I care not what my punishment may be."

With this the prisoner resented herself. It was plain to see that with the clear acknowledgment of her guilt she was through with judge, jury and spectators. A young lawyer arose and advanced to the bar. He was the prosecuting attorney. The woman's admission had robbed the case of all complications. His duty was plain and easy. He looked very serious. It seemed that the conviction, the sentence of the prisoner was a foregone eventuality.

In a very few plain words he stated his case. Cyril Dare, a wealthy broker, on his way to the home of his fiance, had been followed by the prisoner. She had hailed him, and without allowing him to speak a word had shot down her victim. The latter had reeled against a frail wooden railing protecting a deep ravine.

Search had been made for the murdered man. He had not been found. This was the weak point in the prosecution.

Blood stains had been traced, however, the passage of the body over grass and bushes. It had plunged into the boiling flood below. It had been carried along with debris floating on the surface of the water to the numerous mills lining the stream. Some papers, part of a garment identified as belonging to Dare, and portions of a dismembered body had been discovered. There were witnesses to the shooting. The prisoner herself had admitted her crime.

The witnesses proved to be a farmer's pretty daughter and her lover. They had witnessed the tragedy not twenty feet distant. They had seen the prisoner approach Cyril Dare, halt him, shoot him down, and as the body toppled over the edge of the ravine, they had rushed to the spot as the murderess collapsed in a swoon.

The prosecution rested on this. The judge leaned towards the prisoner, who sat like a statue staring fixedly before her.

"Prisoner at the bar," spoke the judge, "we are ready to listen to the defense."

"There is none," simply stated Madeline.

"Your lawyer—"

"I have none."

"One must be supplied."

"I do not wish it."

"Your honor—"

A young man arose from his seat beside a man much older than himself. From the beginning of the trial the latter had kept his eyes fixed upon their fair prisoner. He had often whispered to his companion, who now added:

"I appear for the accused."

Madeline aroused from her lethargy to view the speaker curiously.

"I do not know you," she said coldly.

"It is not necessary."

"I have no money to pay you for your services."

"That is all provided for."

"By whom?"

"You shall know later."

"I must know now," insisted Madeline firmly.

"It is that gentleman whose side I have just left."

"I do not know him, either."

"No more than I," responded the lawyer. "He has supplied the money for the defense. He has been working in your behalf for over two weeks."

Madeline gazed at the man designated. She had never seen him before. He bowed respectfully, and gave her rather a pleasing glance, as if trying to influence her to accept the services of the young attorney without a scene.

"Very well," said Madeline wearily, "have your own way; only you are wasting your time."

"We shall clear your," declared the young lawyer confidently.

"It is impossible."

"You shall see."

This conversation had been carried on in subdued tones, and not audible to judge or jury. Now the young lawyer stepped forward and addressed the court.

"Your honor," he said, "the prisoner has pleaded guilty to the crime with which she was charged. I wish to alter that plea."

"In what respect?"

"The killing of Cyril Dare was not murder."

"That is the accusation."

"It was—justice!"

The young lawyer spoke dramatically. He resumed:

"I shall recite the entire circumstances of the case. I shall claim the release of Madeline Dare under the sanction of the Unwritten Law."

There was a deathlike stillness in the crowded courtroom.

"I will now," continued the lawyer, "relate the wretched story of the life of this unfortunate prisoner at the bar."

"Stop!" rang like a pistol shot from the lips of Madeline Dare, as she sprang wildly to her feet. "I forbid it!"

CHAPTER XIX.

A MYSTERIOUS FRIEND.

A thrill of rare excitement, of aroused curiosity, ran through the courtroom at the echoing cry of the prisoner at the bar. It announced some new complication in the case on trial.

"These proceedings are very irregular," the judge was observing, when the prosecuting attorney bent towards him and whispered in his ear. The judge nodded an assent to some question asked. The attorney beckoned to the young lawyer and both retired into a room adjoining.

There they held quite a conversation. Returning, the prosecuting attorney talked to the judge in low, confidential tones for some time. At its termination he stepped back from the desk and said:

"Your honor, in all fairness to the defense, I think that certain facts within the knowledge of the lawyer for that side of the case should be made public. The prisoner has dissented from this. In the interests of public justice, however, the story the attorney for the defense has to tell should not be suppressed."

"I insist that it shall not be told," spoke Madeline, white to the lips and trembling all over, but uttering the words in a firm tone.

"Let the case proceed," directed the judge simply.

The young lawyer advanced to the bar. It was easy to see that he was filled with professional zeal and in deep sympathy with his indifferent client. As he began speaking, Madeline drew the heavy veil over her face. As he continued his peroration, the audience, held in a thrall of interest and sympathy, swayed, a sea of intent faces, at the power of his eloquence.

How he had ever learned all the details of her lonely, wretched life, the amazed Madeline could not surmise, but he had. From end to end he recited the pitiful details of her first acquaintance with the convict, Barton Rivers, her marriage to the pretended Cyril Dare. He told of her cruel desertion, of the little neglected babe, poor Elinor, of a desperate woman driven frantic by her wrongs, and determined to take into her own hands the condemnation and punishment of the man who had heartlessly wrecked her life.

Her face became a rigid mask.

In profound astonishment the veiled prisoner listened to this story of her life. She could not comprehend how any person could trace her career thus, step by step. After all her care and apparent friendlessness, it had been possible for the young lawyer and his assistants to gather up the tangled threads of her life, and present a coherent story here in the court.

The lure of a heavy fee, or ambition to win the case, or real pity for the beautiful prisoner, made the young lawyer a modern Demosthenes. His graphic story made captive under the witchery of his tale judge, jury and spectators. There was a tense strain on the nerve of every auditor.

"The Unwritten Law!"

The prosecutor briefly summed up the case. Even he had been impressed by the eloquence of the pleader. The case was given to the jury without further evidence. They retired. Within thirty minutes they reported back to the courtroom.

"You have decided on your verdict, gentlemen?" inquired the judge, as the twelve men solemnly and with serious faces filed into the box.

"We have," answered the foreman, handing a written slip of paper to the clerk of the court.

The latter opened it. There was an intense hush in the courtroom.

"We, the jury," he read in a voice somewhat quavering from suppressed excitement, "find a verdict of justifiable homicide."

A cheer rang from the audience. The strange man by the side of the young lawyer grasped his hand and wrung it fervently. Then both sprang forward to catch the falling form of the prisoner. Madeline Dare had fainted away.

It was hours or days later—at first she knew not which when Madeline awoke to consciousness and found herself in a pleasant shaded room, a nurse at her side.

Her first realization of the trying ordeal through which she had passed kept her mind drifting for some time. She finally aroused and the nurse hastened to her side.

"How long have I been here?" asked Madeline.

"Since yesterday."

"They acquitted me in court?"

"Yes, dear, and everybody applauded the verdict."

"I wish I had died," said Madeline desolately, and turned her face to the wall.

Somewhat later she spoke to the nurse again.

"What place is this?" she inquired.

"A private hospital."

"Who brought me here?"

"Your lawyer and a gentleman with him, who ordered us to give you our best care."

"I have no money to pay you."

"That is all arranged for."

"By whom?"

"By the gentleman who came with the lawyer." He will call again later. He wishes to speak with you."

"I do not know why he has taken so strange an interest in my case," said Madeline, "but I wish to thank him."

She awoke from an exhausted sleep two hours later. The nurse again came to her side.

"The gentleman is here, Mrs. Dare," she announced.

"I will see him," said Madeline simply.

The nurse set about getting her charge ready to meet the mysterious man who had so strangely befriended her.

CHAPTER XX.

AFTER THE TRIAL.

Madeline was very pale and careworn, as seated in a cushioned armchair she bowed to her visitor as he entered the room. She had just aroused from a lethargy of utter indifference to all the vital influences of life, and she could not repress a faint natural interest in the stranger who had shown for her such friendliness.

Madeline had noticed this person only casually in the courtroom. As she glanced at him now she could not suppress a decided emotion of dislike. More, it was distrust. The man was not ill-looking, but something sensual and false about his eyes warned her that at heart he was selfish and a schemer.

Whatever his motives, his present role was that of a bluff, careless man who acted on strong impulses. He spoke first.

"You know my name, Mrs. Dare?" he observed.

"They have told me that you were Albion Lane, yes."

"That is correct, madam," was the brisk reply. "I don't want to go over the painful trouble you have had. I have helped you, and I wish to help you further."

"Why?" demanded Madeline sharply, and in a clear, earnest tone.

She fixed her eyes searchingly on Lane as she spoke. His glance evaded her own shiftingly, and fell. He moved restlessly in the chair he had taken uninvited. Then he laughed in an awkward way.

"You want a blunt answer to a plain question, I suppose?" he said.

"I do," replied Madeline.

"First, to explain, then. I am a lonely, friendless man with some means. I never cared much for the world, nor the world for me. I have been a sort of an Ishmael, a wanderer. I happened on this village by chance, I became incidentally interested in the gossip about your case. I happened to see you in jail. Maybe your face attracted me, maybe, a friendless man myself, my better nature sent me to your aid, but I guessed that your strong nature had a reason for what you did. I started out to explore the mystery. You know the result.

"You disclosed my past history," said Madeline.

"As you know. It saved your life."

"Yes," acceded Madeline, wearily—against my will. I wish you had left me to my fate. My heart is dead, life has no attraction for me. I wish I were dead."

She turned her head aside and gazed mournfully through the window at a little distance. The man who announced himself as Albion Lane studied her covertly, studiously, shrewdly.

"I would not say that," he finally observed. "You are young, attractive; you are gifted. The notoriety of your trial

will soon pass away. If it is not remorse—"

Madeline silenced the speaker with a look. It was so definite, so positive and hardened that the man shrank slightly. Her face became a rigid mask, her eyes stony.

"Never think that!" she declared harshly. "I have no scruples concerning what I did. It was the just fate of the man who wrecked my life. What has he left too, for the little child? No, I would do the deed over again, if necessary."

"Ah," murmured Lane, softly," the little child, yes, indeed. You must think of her future. My dear madam, your sentiments will change in time."

"Only for duty," said Madeline. "I have shut my heart to all love—even for that poor, helpless little child. For her sake I may toil and endure, but it will be a spiritless existence."

"Tell me your plans, Mrs. Dare," spoke her companion in a tone meant to be impressive with kindliness.

"I have none."

"You will not remain here?"

"Scarcely."

"The city, then?" insinuated Lane.

"Yes, yes, the city!" cried Madeline in a sudden excess of emotion, longingly, feverishly. "I must be busy. I must work, I must forget."

"Let me help you."

The man approached her as he spoke. He placed a gentle hand on her own. His manner was almost pleading, yet at the touch she quivered and shrank away.

"Poor soull poor soul!" murmured Lane.

"You need not pity me!" flashed out Madeline, almost angrily. "Why are you here—but I must not be unkind. Forgive me. I am unstrung—so unhappy, so hopeless!"

She sank into a momentary stupor of despair. The man went away from her side, but stood regarding her in a sympathizing way

"I do not wish to intrude," he spoke after a pause. "I only want to be a friend to you, to help you. Let me at least be your adviser. Leave here secretly, quietly. Let it be the city. Allow me to make arangements for you."

"You do not seem to realize that I have no money," said Madeline.

"I do, thoroughly," responded Lane. "I will gladly provide you with means to reach the city."

"I cannot accept your offer."

"You must."

"I am already your debtor."

"If you put it that way, a slight increase of the accommodation, if you insist on considering it as such, will not incommode me, and can consistently be accepted by you as a loan until you see brighter days."

"Brighter days!" repeated Madeline bitterly.

"Ah, they will come," Lane assured her confidently. "You will not always feel as you do now. You crave employment Very well. Find a quiet, harmonious home in the city, rest till you have regained your old strength, and go to work."

Madeline studied the face of her visitor in a scrutinizing way.

"You agree to allow me to pay you back what you advance me?"

"Certainly."

She regarded Lane still more closely. It seemed as though she would read the man's very soul.

"Will you answer me one more question truthfully?" she inquired, earnestly and gravely.

"I will."

"Without equivocation?"

"Yes, Mrs. Dare."

"Why have you, an utter stranger, shown me all this kindness?"

"You wish a direct reply?"

I insist upon it."

"Then I will tell you," answered Lane boldly; "it is because I love you!"

The conclusion of this interesting story will be found in the Ledger issue of next week. If you are not a regular subscriber to the Ledger we would like to have your name on our list. The Ledger is only $1.00 per year and we have stories awaiting publication that you cannot afford to miss.

His Success.

"To my wife is due all my success." That is the confession freely made by the president of a big oil company, just after he had sold his holdings for $3,000,000 and given $200,000 to the University of Pittsburg, where he was once a student.

How many successful men there are who know in their hearts that the same thing is true of themselves, yet how few confess it! Some readily make the acknowledgment to their wives, but it is not often that the man who has achieved place and power is willing to confess publicly. Pride, selfishness and the satisfaction of being regarded by their fellows as exceptional men hold them back. Others are so blinded by egotism that they do not realize the truth.

It is not hard for a man to perceive and admit the part his wife plays in his success if she happens to possess a knowledge of business and is thoroughly informed in the affairs of the world. Her help is direct and so immediately effective that it cannot fail of recognition. But such cases are few. The average wife and mother has had neither the opportunity nor the inclination to become familiar with business, and she has no time to indulge in extensive study of such matters. Yet in a great number of cases if her husband is prosperous it is because of her efforts and her judgment.

When they were married probably they had little. Who was it that saved the money which enabled him to make his first investment or to engage in business for himself? His wife. She saw to it that the household expenses were kept down to the lowest limit compatible with health and comfort. She economized and she made him economize. More than all, she kept him free from vice and moral uncleanliness, watched over his health, soothed away the bitterness of defeats and inspired in him the strength to persevere with a cheerful heart.

If that man has risen to be the head of a great corporation or has become a leading light in one of the professions, or if he has achieved the more important success of establishing a good American home, let him ask himself this question: What would he be if it had not been for his wife? If he is candid with himself a good many unpleasant possibilities will present themselves to his mind. He will have to acknowledge that in all probability he would have "gone wrong."

The Sixth Sensé.

Despite the progress of physiology, the study of the human body is full of mystery. Some of its well known organs have never revealed either their uses or the reason of their creation. The part played by the spleen in human life was discovered but recently. It is now regarded as one of the principal agents in the circulation of the blood. But there are in the marvelous human organism mysterious parts which it is possible that no savant, however profound his learning, may ever understand. For instance, in the skull, behind the cartilage of the nose, there is a little cavity of unknown origin. Physiologists believe that at one time—several thousand generations ago—it contained a gland consisting of two lobes joined by their common base.

This cavity—the delta turcica—is, in the opinion of certain savants, the vestige of a sixth sense, which was of great use to the antediluvian ancestors of man. It is believed, says Harper's Weekly, that this little gland enabled them to see in the darkness when they had not yet learned the secret of procuring light; that it was the seat of the mysterious sense of situation or locality the power to orient their course; the sense so highly developed to this day in savages and certain animals. The theory is plausible, but it is doubtful whether man will ever acquire any real knowledge of the reason for the existence of the delta turcica.

Binks—Is Jones a good photographer?

Winks—Yes, indeed. He took a picture of father so natural that mother wouldn't have it in the house.

An Old Windmill.

Who recalls now the name of Nathan Wilbur, and how many have seen the corn grinding windmill which he built on the island of Nantucket, 185 years ago? the New York Herald asks. Wilbur was a sailor who had visited Holland and had found the Dutch using wind driven canvas wings for the sawing of lumber and the conversion of grain into food products. Returning from abroad with a plan in his head, he set about constructing the mill of his own. Oaken beams washed ashore furnished material for the frame work, while deck plankings detached from shipwrecked vessels served for the exterior. With the aid of an old spruce mast, a capstan was connected with the mill for resort to hand power when air currents were lacking. "Using wooden pins and hickory cog teeth for the wheel, Wilbur shaped the structure with tools brought from England, and the visitor to Nantucket still looks with wonder on the fifty foot high windmill completed by an American sailor in the year 1746. For over a century this successful bit of amateur work ground corn, and has been in disuse through the lack of repairs, for not more than about twenty-five years. The last miller who operated it was John Francis Sylvia, a Portuguese, who had for assistant Peter Hoy, a veteran of the Civil War. The last time when the great vanes were set in motion was in the early '80's. A few bushels of corn were then ground into meal to be sold in paper bags at ten cents each as souvenirs. The ancient landmark is now owned by the Nantucket Historical Association, which opens it each year as a sort of museum.

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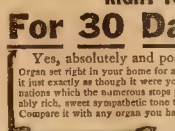

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THE BOY PAGE;

Or, IN SERVICE TO QUEEN BESS

By LIEUTENANT JACK JUDSON

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CHAPTER I.

THE BOY IN DOUBLET.

THE great clock of old St. Paul's was dismally tolling the hour of nine when one of the iron doors of London Tower opened slowly to let a boy out

He was in truth a handsome lad, strongly built and had the carriage of a young prince, though prince he was not. The light of the flaring watch-torch by which the Tower was guarded by night fell upon him as he stood on one of the stone steps that overlooked the moat and surveyed the locality

He was richly dressed after the manner of the day, and his garments indicated that he was a page in the service of England's greatest Queen, Elizabeth. His well fitting doublet of fair crimson velvet with gold markings became his figure gracefully. His nether limbs were encased in green and his silken hose were gray. The cloak of dark blue which hung from his shoulders was loosely fastened at his throat with golden braid, and he carried at his side a beautiful sword in an ornamented scabbard, a blade whose hilt was tipped with a large ruby. In his right hand he carried his cap, which was adorned with a long graceful feather, and his bare head permitted a mass of chestnut hair to frame his face and touch the softness of the blue cloak.

Such, in brief, was the appearance of the youth who emerged from the Queen's Tower at the stroke of nine. Young Sydney was the son of Mordaunt of Montclaire, a brave Englishman who had fallen in one of the foreign wars in battle for the fame of England.

A handsomer and gentler looking boy never wore a monarch's livery. He had his mother's deep blue eyes and his warrior father's courage, as we shall see. The time was near at hand when that courage was to be tried, for dark plots were afoot against Queen Bess, and the great Spanish Armada expected to humble her by secret treason and open war.

After viewing the scene about him for a few moments Percy Sydney struck three times on the wall at his side, and presently the suspended drawbridge fell with a clattering and spanned the moat for his passage.

He crossed with a nimble step, and reached a street which was dark and forbidding. Keeping his hand on the hilt of his sword, he made off and walked rapidly for some time. At the end of a few minutes he stopped in front of a house with a projecting porch, and dodging among the shadows there, knocked heavily on a narrow door. The portal swung open grudgingly and the thin face of a young girl appeared.

"Ho!" she exclaimed seeing Percy on the step and the next moment the page had entered and stood beside her.

"What means this?" the girl said narrowly watching him. "Is not your place in the Tower near the Queen?"

He smiled.

"If I were cooped up there all the time I should die," he said. "The caged bird longs for freedom, you know."

"Yes, I know. But Roland is not at home and I am all alone."

She escorted her visitor to a small room where several candles diffused a moderate light, and Percy, throwing himself upon a settee, said quietly that he would wait for Roland.

"What are all these rumors which Roland brings home?" questioned the girl, who was really beautiful with her lustrous eyes and trim figure.

"He brings you rumors, then?"

"Yes, concerning the King of Spain's great Armada which is said to be on the way to humble our good Queen."

"There are such rumors," answered the boy half indifferently. "If the tithe of them are true, we shall have to fight [illegible]."

"And what have we to fight with?" exclaimed the girl whose name was Janet Raymond.

"My Lord Howard has charge of our fleet, and with him is the gallant Drake whose fame is world-wide. Then, we are hoping that some great storm will scatter the Spanish vessels and send them to the bottom of the sea. The Queen is making certain preparations to meet the Armada, but that is not the worst of it. There is treason at home, London is filled with Philip's spies, and I regret to say that he has secretly enlisted Englishmen in his service."

"They are not Englishmen!" cried Janet, as her cheeks flushed indignantly. "Not loyal ones, at any rate," responded Percy. "That is why I have sought Roland——"

His sentence was interrupted by the opening of a door. He turned to greet a well-built youth of his own age, though not so well attired.

"Welcome!" exclaimed Roland as he advanced and held out a hand to his visitor. "I was detained in Cheapside by a fracas between Sir Rothby Graeme and the populace."

"That man?" cried Percy.

"Yes, I wot you know him well," smiled Roland.

"That I do. He is one of King Philip's secret spies, and we must expose him."

"The people had him cornered and were hurling all sorts of words at him," Roland continued, "and if he had not drawn his sword and kept them back, it might not have gone well with him. He dodged into an alley at last and got away."

At this moment the girl left the room and Roland seated himself beside Percy.

"I also saw Jot, the dwarf," he said. "He avoided me and gave me the slip on the Strand."

"What mischief, think you, is that misshapen bit of humanity up to now, Roland?"

Percy was answered by a shake of the head.

"I'll ferret him out and this very night," the page went on in determined tones. "I don't intend that he shall help the plotters against Queen Bess. I tell you, Roland, that if he gives me trouble I shall let him taste the point of my sword. Jot is a mischief maker and

"I am Jarvis Tetton, if you would know," was the retort. "And I see by your dress that you are of the Tower."

Percy looked the man over from head to foot. The fellow was armed with a sword and fury seemed to dart from the nests of his dark eyes.

"I am Percy Sydney, the Queen's page," he said proudly. "You should have a care how you speak in London."

"My tongue is its own master, sir," was the sharp reply. "And you, my young jackanapes, despite your livery, are but a paid hireling."

Roland now came to his friend's assistance, and both boys drew their blades.

Jarvis Tetton looked them over for a moment, and then, with a derisive laugh, bolted away with Percy and Roland at his heels.

"Run the fox to cover," whispered Percy to Roland. "See where he hides."

It was a long chase, for Tetton seemed to know the intricacies of London's streets and he suddenly vanished down a dark alley.

"Come!" cried Percy. "The kennel can't be far off now."

They plunged into the darkness with their naked blades in their hands. Their feet rattled among the loose stones of the narrow way, and all at once Roland uttered a cry.

"If you dare!"

Spanish gold is very bright in his eyes."

"You can rely upon me, Percy. I know we are but boys, but these Spanish spies shall discover that we can serve the Queen better than they dream of."

Half an hour later the door of the house opened and the two boys strode forth into the street. Roland had armed himself with a rapier, which from much practice he knew well how to use, though it was not as fine a blade as his companion's.

They made their way to another part of London, where they halted to observe a crowd of men and boys who came down the street with loud cries.

"Listen," said Roland, plucking Percy's sleeve. "They are crying out against the Spanish fleet."

As the motley crowd neared the two boys, the cries increased, and it was seen that an effigy of King Philip was being dragged in the dust by the hooting throng.

"That's a nice way to respect monarchy," said a voice at Percy's side.

The young page turned his head and beheld a slender man with evil eyes and a hawk-like nose who was almost overcome with rage.

"I say it to you, sir," he went on, noticing Percy's glance. "I fancy King Philip will not sleep well when he hears of this outrage."

"Let him keep awake, then," answered the boy page with spirit. "By the way, sir, who are you, to speak thus in London?"

"The fox has bitten, Percy!" he groaned and fell against the wall of a dark low house.

The Queen's page gave over his pursuit of the fugitive and turned to assist his companion.

At the same moment he heard a door open and shut.

Roland with the help of his friend staggered to the mouth of the foul alley where a light burned in an iron socket. His face was very white. Percy opened his shirt and discovered some drops of blood. Sure enough he had been wounded.

It's not as bad as I feared, Percy," Roland said, catching his breath once more. "I really thought the miscreant had done for me."

It was discovered that the boy's wound was but slight, and in a few moments he was all right again.

"I wish we could have caught the fellow," Roland said. "A man like that should be in the dungeons of the Tower and not at large."

"He'll find the dungeon soon enough, or I'm not Sydney," assured the young page.

"Shall we go back and look for him?"

"Why not? I am anxious to see what sort of company he keeps."

Thereupon the two boys started back and once more entered the alley, but with extreme caution. London was full of robbers and dangerous people and those were stirring times when one did not know whom to trust.

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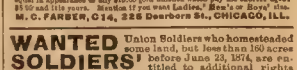

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They reached the house beside which Roland had been struck with the sword. Its outward appearance was dark and forbidding.

"It's just the place for a conspiracy," whispered Roland at which Percy nodded.

The following moment the drawing of bolts fell upon their ears and the boys leaped among the darkest shadows. The door opened slowly and a woman peered out.

She was fifty at least, though she looked younger, and the light of the candle behind her showed the boys her full figure, which to their surprise was clothed in a rich dress.

"I see no one," the woman said, addressing some one whom the boys could not see.

"No? I certainly spitted one of the little rats," replied a man's voice.

"Well, there's no one in sight," and the door was closed.

Percy caught Roland's arm and pulled him away.

"Enough, Roland!" he said. "I know the woman. She is the Duchess Maine, but in the Queen's name what is she doing in that hovel tonight?" and the boys put up their weapons and glided away.

CHAPTER II.

AN ADVENTURE.

If Percy Sydney, the boy page, hoped to discover the plots against Queen Bess and circumvent the plotters, he would certainly have his hands full. King Philip of Spain, who bitterly hated the Queen, had filled London with spies and among them were people who stood high in the Queen's graces. He had fitted out the greatest fleet that had ever swept the seas, and it was even now on its way for the purpose of humbling England's ruler and subjecting her to the harshest treatment.

Queen Elizabeth at heart feared this mighty fleet, but she was a courageous woman as well as a great Queen, and had called to her side the best generals and the most renowned admirals to whom she entrusted the safety of her realm.

Percy had served her from early boyhood and had carried out her wishes so well that he stood high in her favor, and she numbered him among her most devoted adherents. The young page was ready at any time to lay down his life for his mistress, and his devotion to her had brought down upon his head the dislike of her enemies.

When he and Roland left the scene of the adventure in the foul alley they preceeded toward the Tower, but did not reach it. The presence of the Duchess Maine in the old hovel perplexed Percy, for he had believed till that moment that she was true to the Queen. To find her now in the house whither they had chased Jarvis Tetton told him that she was a person to be watched, and he had no doubt that she was hand-in-glove with Philip's spies.

After a short conference at Roland's house Percy bade his friend good night and flitted away.

He did not know that already there was a spy at his heels.

A dwarfish little figure with the blackest of eyes hopped behind him, but kept in the shadows, and not for a moment did he lose sight of the boy page.

Percy knew an old sword-maker who lived in a queer building—a man by the name of Nimble. He had once refused to become the head armorer in the Tower, and many nobles brought their blades to him for resharpening, for he was an adept at that work.

Knowing that at any time he might have occasion to use a sword with the keenest of points he resolved to pay old Nimble a visit at his workshop, and thither he directed his steps.

The drawfish spy who was the same Jot of whom we have heard the boys speak, kept Percy in sight, and when he mounted the steps that led to Nimble's armory Jot curled himself up like an old fox hard by and watched the house.

The boy page found old Nimble at work, though the hour by now was getting late.

The old man turned his face towards the door as Percy entered and greeted him with a smile. He even laid aside the blade he was finishing, and folding his arms, looked the youth over from head to foot.

"Well, Master Sydney," said he, "what brings you to Toby Nimble's kennel at this hour?"

Toby took a seat in an odd-looking chair and studied the sword-maker's face for a minute.

"You don't think that I have to abide in the Tower all the time, Master Toby?" said he.

"No. Squirrels like to come down from the trees now and then, for there are as good nuts on the ground as among the branches."

Nimble laughed at his own words and waited for Percy to explain.

"In the first place," said he at last, "I want my sword retipped," and the boy drew his blade and handed it to the old armorer.

"Faith and it needs it," was the response. "Why, it would hardly prick a leg of mutton, boy."

"I know that, Toby."

"What have you been practicing with?" asked the old man.

"Nothing," answered Percy evasively. "But I thought as how I might need a good keen point before long."

Nimble began work on Percy's sword at once.

"I had a good customer yesternight," he observed with a sly glance at the boy. "He was one of those people who pay generously."

"Indeed, Master Toby? I'm glad he paid well."

"Yes, sir. Rothby Graeme can pay well, you know."

The boy started at the mention of the name, for he knew that Sir Rothby was considered in the pay of Philip of Spain.

"Whom does he expect to fight?" questioned the youth.

"That I cannot tell you," answered old Toby. "Sir Rothby did not say much, but he did ask me a singular question."

Percy made no reply.

"He asked me what I knew about the Rat Trap, for he must have learned that I once lived in that part of London."

Percy was deeply interested.

"I have heard of a house called the Rat Trap," he said, watching the old armorer closely.

"I actually lived in it once," Toby continued. "It's a stone house full of strange rooms like dungeons, and moreover it has a number of trap-doors through which those who are not familiar with the place are likely to fall."

"But why should it interest a man like Sir Rothby?"

"That's more than I can make out, boy. I never would have guessed that a man like Sir Rothby had heard of the Rat Trap. When he went away I found a folded paper at the foot of his chair. I can't make out what it means."

As he finshed, old Nimble reached up to a shelf and took down a bit of paper which he handed to Percy. The boy took it eagerly and bent forward to inspect it, while Nimble returned to his task.

All at once an exclamation from the boy drew the armorer's attention to him. Percy was looking at him with a face devoid of color.

"What have you discovered, Master Percy?"

"This is, indeed, a strange paper for Sir Rothby to have!" cried the Queen's page. "It is a drawing of the Queen's apartments in the White Tower."

Percy's blade nearly fell from Toby's hands.

"The what?" he cried, coming forward. "It did look like a drawing of certain rooms, but I never would have dreamed that those lines refer to the Tower."

"They do, Toby. Do you think Sir Rothby will ever come for his lost paper?"

"I think this is the last place where he would think he had lost it."

"Then it is mine," and Percy coolly pocketed the paper and resumed: "These are dangerous times, you know, Toby. We have the Spaniards upon us, and London is filled with traitors."

"So I have heard, but you surely don't think that Sir Rothby is against the Queen. Heaven bless her!"

"I don't know what to think," answered the boy. "I had a very exciting adventure tonight with one of Philip's spies, and before the scare is over I expect to have many more."

Nothing more was said, and Percy waited till his good sword had been repointed and well inspected, after which he put it in its shining scabbard and offered the old armorer silver which was refused.

"If Sir Rothby should come nosing around here looking for his paper I will know nothing about it," the old man said with a sly wink. "I will be as dumb as an oyster."

"And as blind as a mole," laughed Percy, as he rose to go.

When he quitted the armorer's shop the figure which had crouched all this time in the shadows of the building bestirred itself and once more set upon his trail.

Percy dodged into one street and out of another till he was on the other side of the city, where he drew up near a strange looking stone house partly surrounded by a low stone wall. There was no light very near, therefore the old place looked somber indeed, and the boy page could well imagine that it was used, if at all, for no good purpose.

After inspecting it for a few moments the boy advanced and gently tried the door.

It was locked and immovable. Anxious to see more, for his curiousity had become aroused from what old Nimble had told him, he vaulted over the stone wall and found himself in a cramped garden which had not been tended for years.

As he struck the soft earth he happened to glance upward, and to his astonishment saw a light at one of the upper windows of the old house.

Some one was even then in the Rat Trap and he wondered if Sir Rothby Graeme or any other of the suspected traitors had already taken possession.

The light vanished almost as soon as noticed, and the boy page moved toward a dipaidated porch under which he found a door that yielded to his touch.

He let himself into the old house with his naked sword in his hand. The squeaking of rats fell upon his ears, but no sign of light rewarded his sharp eyes.

Presently he heard a noise as of footsteps on a staircase, and that instant he hugged a corner and held his breath.

He heard a door open and then the glare of a taper saluted his vision.

It was a small light, but for all that it was enough to reveal the figure of the person who carried it. His heart seemed to leap into his throat when he found that he was face to face with Sir Rothy Graeme, the Spanish King's friend. Nor was this all. Behind Sir Rothby on the next step stood another person, a handsome woman with the look of a princess, and she had gathered up her drapery so as to elevate it above the grime of the stair and was peering over the man's shoulders into the room where he (Percy) stood.

All at once a whistle which was a signal was heard on the outside of the house, and that moment the light was extinguished and the place swam in darkness.

Percy felt for the door by which he had entered the Rat Trap and found it. He pulled it open and slipped out.

The next instant he was pounced upon by some being which at first he mistook for a huge dog, but then he heard a human voice.

"I've caught the spy, master!" cried the person who held Percy. "I have him in the grip of my hands."

The Queen's page struggled with all his might.

He tried to get at his foe with his sword, but the nimble hands prevented, and they went to the ground together.

There rose a terrible clatter in the house. Doors were slammed back and forth, a voice called out for some one to hold on, but this only added zest to Percy's efforts.

All at once he broke loose from his captor. He threw him from him with all the power at his command and sprang to his feet.

In another moment he was racing for the stone wall.

His hand was on the top of it, and he was about to vault over into the narrow street when he was seized from behind. He shook his assailant off and went over like a fox.

"I'll have you yet!" cried his enemy, and as Percy got upon his feet he faced about and thrust out at the object which had already reached the topmost stone.

There was a sharp cry of pain, and then Queen Bess' page, sword in hand, wheeled about and went down the street like a deer.

CHAPTER III.

DRAWING BAD BLOOD.

Master Percy was quite sure he had encountered Jot, the dwarf, at the old stone wall, and when he reached a place where one of the night lights revealed things, he looked at his sword and found a reddish stain upon the blade.

At first he thought of returning to the Tower and showing the Queen the diagram which he had obtained from old Nimble, the armorer, but, knowing that it would keep, he postponed doing so. Instead, he made his way to a famous coffee house patronized by the nobility, hoping there to learn the latest news concerning the Spanish invasion.

His entrance caused no little flurry, for all knew that he was in the immediate service of Queen Bess, and a number of young nobles gathered around him to hear the latest from the court. Percy was no betrayer of his royal mistress, so he kept a still tongue, much to his questioners' disappointment.

All the young men left him but one, a good looking person who was well known to the young page.

"Really, Master Sydney," said Harold Grahame, "what think you of the news from abroad?"

"I have heard but little," was the answer.

"Come, now. You are at court, and you must know what is the feeling there."

Percy did not speak for a moment.

"You must remember, Master Grahame, that the Queen divides her secrets with her minister and never shares them with her pages."

"Truly spoken," cried the other, "but I am aware that court secrets sometimes leak out."

At this moment the boy's attention was drawn to a man who had just entered and taken a seat at one of the heavy oaken tables to which he had summoned a waiter, whom he dispatched for a mug of sack.

"Ho!" thought the boy. "Sir Rothby has almost beaten me hither."

The man was indeed Sir Rothby Graeme, whom he had last seen on the stairway of the Rat Trap with the handsomely dressed lady. He was well clothed and carried a sword which hung at his left side. Sir Rothby was quite alone, and on account of his importance, he had already been bowed to by at least twenty people then in the room.

"If that our friend Sir Rothby is making the rounds alone tonight," the youth remarked to his companion.

Harold glanced toward the indicated person.

"Yes," said he. "It is whispered that he is to be given a good command in the Queen's fleet destined to operate against the Armada."

"What! Sir Rothby?" exclaimed Percy with a start.

"The same, Master Sydney, and pray, why should not such a loyal gentleman as he fight for his mistress?"

"To be sure," Percy answered to ward off suspicion.

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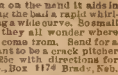

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I have in my possession a prescription for nervous debility, lack of vigor, weakened manhood, failing memory and lame back, brought on by excesses, unnatural drains, or the follies of youth, that has cured so many worn and nervous men right in their own homes—without any additional help or medicine—that I think every man who wishes to regain his manly power and virility, quickly and quietly, should have a copy. So I have determined to send a copy of the prescription free of charge, in a plain, ordinary sealed envelope to any man who will write me for it.

This prescription comes from a physician who has made a special study of men and I am convinced it is the surest-acting combination for the cure of deficient manhood and vigor failure ever put together.

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Symptoms leave quick. Cure yourself at home now. Send for free treatment and remarkable book on Cure of Blood Poison.

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"'Tis said that even now he is enlisting men for his enterprise. I am thinking of offering my services to him."

"He is a fearless man, good enough, Harold, but I believe if I were monarch of England I would seek some other to carry out my wishes."

"What, think you, Sir Rothby would say were I to report your language to him?"

The cheeks of the boy pagee instantly crimsoned.

He felt deep in his heart from what he had discovered that Sir Rothby Graeme was a traitor to the Queen, and leaning over the table toward Harold, he said:

"You are at liberty to do so if you wish. I have no desire to curry favors with Sir Rothby."

"By my head you are curt!" cried Harold. "I am quite well acquainted with Sir Rothby, and your insolence should reach his ears."

Percy settled on the bench without answering, and forthwith Harold rose and paced the distance between him and the noble.

He saw him catch Sir Rothby's eye, but could not hear the words that passed between them.

All at once Sir Rothby turned his head and transfixed the young page with a lowering look.

"Look me through, sir," said Percy under his breath. "The time is coming, Sir Rothby, when you may see more of Percy Sydney."

All at once the nobleman set his mug down on the table and strode toward the Queen's servant. He towered like a giant above Percy as he advanced, and his cheeks went red and white in the space of a second as his feet crushed the rushes on the floor.

The boy all the time was watching him like a hawk.

Sir Rothby paused at the table, and the next moment his hand descended upon Percy's shoulder.

"I hear, sirrah," said he in rasping tones, "that you would not trust me if you were the ruler of Britain?"

The youth shrugged his shoulder, but was not awed by the voice of the speaker.

"You have not heard wrongly, sir," he said, looking up into Sir Rothby's face.

"Have a care, my young sir. A man who has fought lions may stoop to crush a fly."

These insolent and threatening words went through the page like an arrow from one of the Queen's bowmen.

"I have no quarrel with you," Percy answered. "I came here as an humble citizen—"

"Or a spy!" interrupted Sir Rothby.

"I'll have no words with you," cried Percy, rising. "You may drink your sack in peace."

But the nobleman was not to be thrown off in this manner. He came round the table with the whitest of faces and his eyes glued upon the boy.

"I'll show you how to speak to you betters, sir!" he cried, lifting his hand.

"If you dare!"

With the last word Percy's blade leaped from its scabbard and glittered in the light. He at once placed himself on the defensive and knew that the eyes of every one present were centered upon him.

It was not his wish to get into a quarrel with such a man as Sir Rothby Graeme, and he resolved to back away and return to the Tower.

Suddenly he found his retreat shut off by the furious noble and the only way to avoid him was to leap across the table and make a break for the door. He wondered if Jot, whom he must have wounded at the stone wall, had told Sir Rothby of his presence there, but he had no time to investigate.

As his eye roved around the place he beheld Jarvis Tetton, the man whom he and Roland had chased into the dark alley, and fancied that that individual had recognized him.

In a second he discovered that his supposition was true.

"Ho, ho, Sir Rothby!" roared out the voice of Jarvis Tetton, "let me have the pleasure of spitting the young hare for you."

Jarvis Tetton had drawn his sword and was coming forward with rapid strides, and Percy found that he had roused a new lion.

"Stand back, sir!" he cried to Jarvis Tetton. "My quarrel is not with you."

"But I will pluck a crow with you," was the response. "I owe you a good deep thrust, anyhow."

The Queen's page turned full upon the new foe and coolly awaited him.

Jarvis Tetton bore down upon the boy with savage fury in his malignant eyes.

"Stand back, good gentlemen, and see me spit this hare!" he cried to the approaching crowd.

"He is the Queen's page," shouted several.

"I care not who he is!" roared Tetton. "A hare in silk is no better than one in fustian."

As Jarvis came on Percy's blade shot out and swept aside by a clever stroke the steel carried by his adversary. The crowd clapped their hands at the boy's adroitness.

"He fights like a gentleman," cried one.

"I'll warrant old Nimble taught him how to use the steel," said another.

A smile gathered at Percy's lips, for the last remark was true, since Toby, the old armorer, had taught him the best points in swordsmanship.

His act enraged Jarvis Tetton. The man flushed with shame and vengeance.

"I'll ruffle your doublet!" he cried, and he lunged.

"It's a game two can play at," retorted Percy. "This is not the dark alley."

For a moment, amid the tense silence of the onlookers, steel met steel. Percy's nerves seemed iron. He caught every movement of his antagonist, and at last with a subtle twist he sent his blade flying over the head of the spectators.

A loud shout greeted his victory.

"Your blade, Sir Rothby," cried Jarvis Tetton. "I'll return it red with the blood of this young court rabbit."

Before Sir Rothby Graeme could refuse to lend his sword, it was wrenched from his grasp by Jarvis Tetton who returned more incensed than ever to the combat.

Percy met the new assault with the coolness of a veteran. Suddenly he lunged forward, and catching his foe off his guard, sent his sword forward like an arrow and buried it almost to the hilt in Jarvis Tetton's breast.

As the man reeled away with a sharp little cry, the boy page sprang over the bench and faced the crowd.

"You will witness that this encounter was not of my seeking," he exclaimed, gazing into the white faces about him. "My royal mistress has taught me to avoid frays, but never to prove a coward while I wear her livery."

Some stooped to pick Jarvis up and another handed Sir Rothby his own sword.

"You deserve to feel the length of this blade," cried the nobleman, as his hands closed about the jeweled hilt.

"I think I am quite able to defend myself against any adversary single-handed," was the quick reply. "I care not where that adversary lives, in a castle or in the darkness of the Rat Trap."

This thrust sent every vestige of color from Sir Rothby's face.

"I shall report your insolence to the Queen!" he exclaimed.

"Do so," laughed the undaunted boy. "Rather report my work to the lady in silk who was in the Rat Trap this night. I am not hard to find, Sir Rothby Graeme. My address is in the Tower. When I am not there you will find me elsewhere looking after the Queen's interests as against the traitors who are in King Philip's pay."

Sir Rothby, too angry to speak, waved his hand at the youth, who walked toward the street with his sword in his grasp, and as he passed out into the light he almost collided with Roland.

"What now, Master Percy?" cried the other boy. "A naked sword in your hand before the 'Lion and Eagle'?"

"Yes, Roland. I was forced to let out a little bad blood in yonder. We'll hear from the traitors again," and putting up his blade, Percy took Roland's arm and they walked away.

This fine story will be continued in the next issue of the Ledger. A lot of strange and exciting things happen. Read it. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you if you send in a year's subscription. It only costs $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

* * *

Joke Passed Many.

Two years ago the manager of a New York hotel was surprised by a request from San Antonio, Texas, for him to send down there all the humming birds' tongues he could buy in the market. He realized that somebody was the victim of a practical joke, but not until the other day did he get the details, when the man responsible turned up in New York. The joker gave this explanation:

"The management of one of the hotels down there is an Englishman. As President Charles W. Eliot of Harvard was about to visit the town preparations were made to give him the very finest banquet that could be put together. The manager came to me and asked me to suggest some rare dish that would be sensational. I suggested humming birds' tongues.

"'By George, that's just the idea,' he said, 'but I say, old chap, where shall I get them?'

"I told him they were plentiful in the neighborhood of Tampico and at his request dictated a letter to a friend down there to get as many humming birds' tongues as he could and send them on. The Englishman's idea at first was to cook them and have them on the table as a sort of centerpiece, with each guest to be allowed a taste, but he changed his mind and decided to serve them at each plate. That's why I got him to telegraph to the hotel manager here."

"Well, sir, I must have got as many as 1,000 letters from members of the Audubon Society protesting against the wholesale slaughter of the birds, and some letters came from abroad. So there were other persons besides the Englishman who did not see the joke."

* * *

Uncle Joe's Check.

Col. Henry Casson, sergeant-at-arms of the House of Representatives, has the original check given by former Speaker Joseph G. Cannon, a few years ago to a book agent, and about which an interesting story has been told.

An agent visited the speaker and interested him in an elaborate edition of something which Uncle Joe didn't want, but bought. When the books arrived Uncle Joe examined them and decided at once that something had been put over on him. When the agent came for his money the former speaker determined to make him indorse a terse sentiment on books, so he wrot out a check for $73, this amount due, and on the back of it he inscribed:

"Pay to the order of Mr. Blank, in full payment for an edition which was not worth a d——, and dear at that price, but for the ease and grace with which he put it over on your Uncle Joe it was well worth the money."

* * *

Advance Information.

Dr. J. M. Buckley, the well-known editor and divine, addressing a New York City Sunday School, related an incident that greatly interested the children. He told of meeting a ragged, hungry-looking little girl in the street on a wintry day, and when he questioned her she recited a pitiful tale of a sick mother and ypunger brothers and sisters without food. After giving her a silver dollar, the good doctor followed at a safe distance to see what she would do with the money.

"Now, children, what do you suppose was the first thing she bought with that dollar?" said Dr. Buckley. "Hands up!"

Up went the hands, and one child after another ventured a guess, but none proved correct. Finally a little boy, whose hand alone remained, was asked for his answer to the question.

"A basket," he sang out.

"Correct!" said the doctor. "There's a boy who thinks! Now, son, come up here on the platform and tell us why you think is was a basket."

After considerable coaxing the boy reached the platform, but seemed unwilling to talk. "Go on," urged the doctor. "I want these boys and girls to learn to think, too."

The boy still hesitated, and Dr. Buckley took from his pocket a silver quarter. "I'll give you this," he said, "if you'll tell us what makes you think the little girl bought a basket first."

"Be-be-cause," stammered the youngster at last, moved by the sight of the money. "I was over in Hoboken last Sunday and heard you tell the story there."

* * *

A Quick Stop.

Alexander R. Smith, the secretary of the canal terminal commission, said to a New York friend:

"New York's foreign commerce has increased in the past year over $200,000,000. New York's success as a commercial center is, in fact, phenomenal—as phenomenal as the success of John Ballard's son.

"Ballard's brother, the judge, was once hearing a case where Lawyer Lawless prosecuted. Lawyer Lawless was notorious for his longwindness. He would sometimes speak for days and days. On this occasion he had been spouting forth his concluding argument for six hours, and the end was nowhere in sight, when Judge Ballard beckoned his brother John and whispered:

"'Can't you stop him, Jack?'

"'I'll stop him in two minutes,' John Ballard replied confidently.

"And he wrote and passed to Lawyer Lawless the following note:

"'My Dear Colonel:—As soon as you finish your magnificent argument, I would like to have you join me at the Revere House in a bumper of rare old bourbon.'

"Lawyer Lawless, halting in the midst of an impassioned period, put on his glasses and read the note that had been handed him, then he removed his glasses again, and, taking up his hat and bag, said:

"'And now, may it please the court and gentlemen of the jury I leave the case with you.'"

* * *

Something of a Task.

The office manager turned to the new boy.

"Here, George," he said, "go into the next room and look up 'colorable,' I'm not quite sure about the spelling."

The boy disappeared and didn't return. The manager put the letter aside and took up some duties. Presently he remembered the boy and went out to look for him. He found the lad studying the big dictionary with great intentness.

"What are you doing, George?" he asked.

The boy looked around.

"I forgot the word you told me, sir," he replied, "an I'm lookin' through the book to find it."

The manager gasped.

"How far have you got?"

"I'm just finishing the second page, sir."

"That'll do, George."

* * *

A Poor Memory.

A certain medical specialist was in the habit of using a notebook to assist his memory. In the course of time his aged father died. The worthy doctor attended the funeral as chief mourner with due solemnity. At the close he was observed to draw out a notebook and cross out the words, "Mem: Bury father."

THE SNUB-NOSED GIRL.

I celebrate the snub-nosed maid,
  She is a miss
Distinctly fashioned, be it said,
  To kiss.

Some try to manufacture fun
  About her nose;
But never set me down as one
  Of those.

I have no time or patience for
  Mere ribald quips,
No wise man would avoid her cor-
  Al lips.

I say her nose should plaudits win,
  'Tis retrousse,
Which is a kind that's never in
  The way.

Outgrow Stupidity.

The finer individual qualities are often late in revealing themselves. It is the old, racial tendencies that rule in childhood. Irritation at restraint, irresponsibility and primitive insolence are to be expected. Some mature slowly and are called stupid. George Eliot learned to read with difficulty. Thorwaldsen, the sculptor, spent three years in one class in the village school; Burger, the poet of German ballads, required several years to learn the Latin forms; and Alfer, the Italian poet, was dismissed by his teachers, so backward was he. Were it necessary the list might be indefinitely extended by adding Newton, Byron, Ibsen, Walter Pater, Pierre Curie and others. Sometimes seeming stupidity is due to interest in subjects outside the little circle round which the tethered children are allowed to graze. Fulton, Watt and Sir Humphrey Davy in early childhood were already busy with the experiments which were to be told to children after the teachers who called them stupid were forgotten.

Tolstoy, Goethe and Dean Swift were refused their degrees because they failed in their university examinations, and, for the same reason, Ferdinand Brunetiere was denied admission to the Ecole Normale Superieure. At Cambridge, also, Sir William Thomson was not a senior wrangler, though one of the examiners admitted that "the successful competitor was not fit to cut pencils for Thomson.' When asked why he had delayed so long on one of the problems which he himself had discovered, Thomson replied that, having forgotten that it was one of his own inventions, he had worked it as a wholly new problem.

Thomson's failure to win the Cambridge honor because of the unusual memory of one of his competitors illustrates an important class of cases in which the examination system completely collapses. Justus von Liebig, who father was compelled to remove him from the gymnasium because of his wretched work, attributed his failure in the school to his utter lack of auditory memory.

Unjustly Accused.

Andrew Carnegie at a dinner in New York talked about the Scotch dialect.

"It's a hard lingo to understand," he said. "It often causes awkward mistakes.

"Once an American divine spent Sunday in a Highland inn. In the morning he gave the maid a tip of a sovereign, and he said, looking earnestly at her—for she was a pretty maid:

"'Do you know, Kathleen, you are a very good-looking lassie?

"Of course Kathleen was pleased, but, being modest, she blushed like a rose and answered:

"'Ah, na! Ah, na! But my kissin', sir, is beautiful!'

"The divine frowned.

"'Leave the room, you wicked young baggage!' he said sternly.

"He didn't know, you see, that modest Kathleen had been simply praising, in her Highland dialect, the superior charms of her cousin Janet of Peebles."

Maggie—Yis, mum; I'm leavin' yez. I don't like the snip of a dude that's callin' on Miss Mabel.

Mistress—The idea! He doesn't call to see you, so what——

Maggie—I know he doesn't, mum; but the neighbors might think he does.

A Truthful Tar.

The maddest seaman that ever ported a helm is Capt. Henry Frerichs, of the Hansa liner Birkenfels. One of the morning papers told a hair-raising story about the Birkenfels' voyage. It was related that one of a pair of lions, caged between decks, escaped at the height of the storm, and the brave officers had to kill it before the crew of lascars would return to duty. The story was written in hifalutin style. There was a thrill in every line. "Some of the story is true," said Capt. Frerichs. "For example, the name of by boat is the Birkenfels, and it is a steamer. But we had no lions on board. The only animals we had were a tame tomcat and a canary bird."

Capt. Frerichs meditated a moment. "Maybe the reporter got hold of a garbled version of what really did happen, though," he said. "I don't want to be too hard on reporters. Some of them do not lie, and this was rather a remarkable case."

He had to be coaxed to tell the story, for he plaintively declared that the original taletheller had made a mark of him. "Well," he reluctantly stated, "it was in the very height of that storm when the cat went mad. Frightened, I suppose—poor dumb brute. It was creeping up from behind on the first officer—creeping, creeping, creeping." Capt. Frerichs gave the "creeping" part with fine dramatic effect. "Then," said he, "the canary bird saw what was about to happen, and, with one mighty surge, it burst its cage bars apart and killed the cat."

"Now, waiter, a little asperity, please, when you order for me."

"We're all out of it, sir."

Beyond Reach of Law.

One of the officials of our embassy at London tells of an incident that occurred in a train proceeding through the north of Scotland. There was another passenger in the compartment at the time the American entered.

At the next station three Scots came in. They were all big, burly men and completely filled up the seat on the side of the compartment where the first mentioned passenger was seated. At the next station the carriage door opened to admit a tall, cadaverous individual, whose girth was about that of a lamp post.

He tried to wedge himself in between two of the passengers already there, and said to one of them:

"Here, you must move up a bit. Each seat is intended to accommodate five persons, and according to act of Parliament you are entitled to eighteen inches of space."

"Aye, aye, my friend," replied one of the Scots; "that's a' very gude for you that's been built that way; but ye canna blame me if I ha' na' been constructkit according to act of Parliament."

Saving, Anyhow.

"When I first put in electric lights," Arthur Aull makes Mr. Patch say, "they told me they'd put me in a meter and I could make my bill as low as I chose, or else I could have all the light I wanted for $3 a month. I said you wouldn't catch me paying out $3 when I could save most of it by using a little care. So in the meter went. Within two weeks after it was installed everybody in the house had nervous prostration. When any one went into another room during the evening all the rest of the family yelled in chorus, 'Don't forget to turn out the lights when you come back.' When I went into the kitchen after supper I invariably knocked my shins or bumped my head hunting in the dark for the electric lamp. If anybody came in during the evening I groaned to myself, 'Up goes the light bill.' At the end of the month my light bill was $2.75. It had been an awful struggle, but we had saved a quarter."

Too Good a Subject.

"Yes," the young medico sighed, "the healing profession is full of difficulties. The other day, for instance, I had a patient who ought to have gone to a warmer climate. Couldn't afford it. I decided to try hypnotism. I painted a large sun on the ceiling, and by suggestion induced him to think it was the sun."

"And how did it work?" inquired the listener.

The doctor passed a hand wearily over his brow. "He's down with sunstroke," he said sadly.

The Extras.

One of the things which help swell the traveler's expenses, both in this country and abroad, is the "extra." It may or may not be charged in the bill, but it is sure to be paid for.

Probably even the most generous traveler, however, will have some sympathy for the gentleman in the following story, who was made to pay liberally for a certain annoying privilege.

During his stay at the hotel the weather had been very hot.

"Charles," said the landlord to the clerk, who was making out the bill to be presented to the departing guest, "have you noticed that the gentleman in number seven has consulted the thermometer on the piazza at least ten times every morning during his stay here?"

Charles replied that he had.

"Well," said the landlord, "charge him the price of one dinner a day for the use of the thermometer."

Cows With Spectacles.

A firm of opticians in St. Petersburg turns out thousands of pairs of glasses every year to be worn by cows. "There are a great many cows that wear spectacles in my country," said a Russian traveler. "I have seen a herd numbering over forty thousand cows with glasses on. It was on the steppes, the great Russian prairies. Our plains for six months in the year are covered with snow, but during a part of the time delicate fresh grass tips protrude from that white and dazzling mantle. The cows then are turned out to feed on the new grass, but if their eyes are unprotected, the dazzle of sunshine on the snow gives them snow blindness. Thousands of cows suffered horribly, and hundreds died of lack of food caused by snow blindness, until a rude, cheap kind of spectacles, made of leather and smoked glass, was invented and used with great success."

Clocks Not Wanted.

There had been some talk of placing a clock in the tower of the village church. But John, the old sexton, who lived in the little cottage opposite the church, declared himself "dead agin it," and expressed the opinion that it would mean "an awful waste of brass" were the scheme carried out.

"We want no clocks," he said the other day. "We've done without clocks up to now, an' we shall manage. Why, lyin' i' my bed of a mornin' I can see the time by the sun-dial over the porch."

"Yes," replied one who approved of the scheme, "that's all right so far as it goes. But the sun doesn't shine every morning. What do you do then?"

"Why," answered John surprisedly, "I knows then as it ain't fit weather to be out o' bed, an' I just stops where I is."

Concerning Suicide.

Suicide is more prevalent in Germany than anywhere else, the most depressing feature of the vital statistics of that country being the number of children who destroy themselves. But Hungary holds the record for old age among attempted suicides. In 1888 Janos Meryessi, who was 84 years old, jumped off the suspension bridge at Budapest into the Danube. He was rescued, and explained that he wished to end his life, as he was becoming too decrepit to support his father and mother. This extraordinary statement proved to be true. Meryessi's parents being aged 115 and 110 respectively; and a public subscription was organized to see them all three above want.

It's easier for a shiftless man to make friends than to make good.

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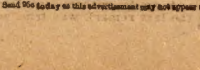

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FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

THE CLUB'S FOURTH

BY MARY CAROLINE HYDE.

Six boys, aged about fourteen and fifteen, had formed a club called The President's Own. Originally, the club-room had been the upper story of a brick stable, and the boys had secured the use of it free of rent.

For several weeks, the club had been saving money for a glorious Fourth of July celebration. Sky rockets, Roman candles, and even flower baskets were to be bought with the ten dollars and thirty-two cents they had collected for this purpose and were to be set off from a huge rock above the village, where all could see the display.

James Porter, the keeper of the largest grocery in the village, went to New York for the fireworks which the President's Own had ordered; the weekly paper announced the pyrotechnic treat in store for Dogberry, and all was in trim for the most patriotic Fourth the little town had ever known.

The Fourth was due on Saturday and on Friday the President's Own fidgeted through their lessons, and 4 o'clock had no more than sounded than they ran pell mell to the clubroom, where they had agreed to meet, six strong.

"I saw Jim Porter this afternoon," announced Maxwell Fenn, a leader of the club, "and he said he had our fireworks all right. Suppose we go right away and get them."

"That's the idea," said Alfred Warren, leading the way. "Come on. There's no time to spare."

The boys started whistling and doing a double shuffle down the path, when Clarence Richmond called out, "Who's got the money for the 'technics?"

"That's so!" answered the rest, stopping short. "Guess we'd better go back and get it, if you've forgotten it."

Upon this The President's Own wheeled and returned to the clubroom, moving in a body on the closet, where the money was hoarded in an old leather wallet. The closet was well lighted by the window opposite, and the boys searched every nook and corner without finding the wallet.

"Where did you keep it, anyway?" was demanded of Maxwell Fenn.

"I didn't keep it anywhere; I gave it to Clarence," growled Maxwell.

"I know where I kept it well enough," retorted Clarence. "I kept it right up here on this shelf under the baseball caps, but it ain't there now; that's sure enough."

The President's Own groaned. Again and again they fumbled among the caps on the shelf, and among the bats, golf clubs and tennis racquets on the floor of the closet. The money was not to be found and they turned away looking into one another's faces for explanation, but finding none.

"What's to be done now?" asked Clarence.

"You ought to know."

"Well, I don't."

"Say! How'd it do to say nothing 'bout it tonight and tomorrow we can look again," suggested Alfred.

"Agreed!" cried the others, so they filed out of the clubroom, locking it with the greatest care, and disbanding, to go home with very sober faces and gloomy hearts.

The much-anticipated Fourth was a sunny, delightful day, and The President's Own convened early at the club room, as they had agreed. A second search, however, was as disappointing as the first had been, and a heavy-hearted six stood about the club table, tapping abstractedly upon it.

"It's hard on old Porter, too," observed one of them.

"Oh, his fireworks 'll keep till next year when we'll be able to buy them," said another.

Locking the door the boys walked slowly down the main street, looking at other boys' fireworks. Thus they whiled away the day as best they could till 4 o'clock. Wandering dejectedly along a side street, they came face to face with General Bradbury, the summer cottager of whom all Dogberry was so proud.

"Hallo, boys!" he cried. "A glorious day for your celebration. Hear you are to give us something fine tonight."

Glancing hastily from one to another, the boys blurted out, "That's all up now; the money's lost somehow!"

"What! How?" the general demanded, sympathetically, much surprised.

"We don't know," answered Clarence. "The men about the stable might have stolen it," and then he stopped, flushing at the realization that he had unintentionally expressed the boys' suspicion.

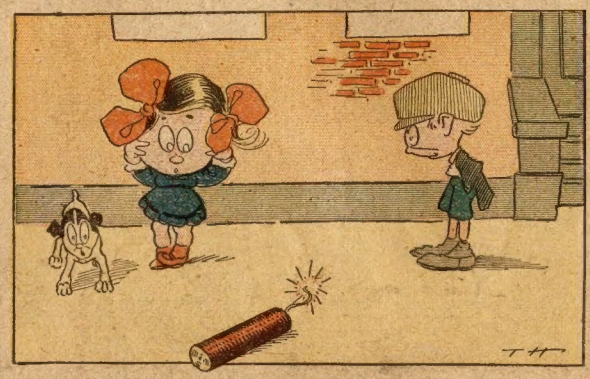
"See here, my lads, don't be so quick to blame some one till you're sure! Suppose you come up to my house this evening, and if there are any fireworks to be found in the town we'll send them off."

"We will," said The President's Own heartily, then added hesitatingly, "Jim Porter's got some fireworks, sir. We were going to take them, but——"

"Oh, yes! I understand," laughed the general, and he turned onto the main street and hurried to the pyrotechnic-supplying Porter.

Half-past 7 o'clock that evening found The President's Own assembled upon the terrace of the general, helping him to adjust the most elaborate fireworks display that the little village had ever dreamed of.

The general's pretty daughter and housekeeper now left her seat on the plazza and, joining The President's Own on the terrace, invited them to the dining-room to complete their celebration there. This invitation produced a lively whispering among the boys of the club, and they followed their host and hostess to the dining-room. Before partaking of the tempting refreshments, Maxwell Fenn rose to make a little speech.



The Kid—Ah, rats, dere's only one thing more sickenin' to see dan a goil throwin' a rock and dat's to watch 'em shoot fireworks.

"It has been unanimously decided, General Bradbury," he said, "that you shall be asked to become a member of The President's Own. The club has now existed two years, and this is the first occasion upon which we have extended the right hand of fellowship to a fellow not our own age. We shall be glad to have you belong."

With cheeks very red, he sat down and dug deep into his mound of ice cream.

"Thank you, my boys," answered the general, waving his glass of lemonade. "I am highly honored and shall be very pleased to become what might be termed a sleeping partner of The President's Own."

The cheers that followed this pithy acceptance were only quieted when Miss Bradbury held up her dainty hand and asked for a moment's attention.

"My father," she said, "has told me of the club's pecuniary loss, and I have thought that if they would be so good as to allow me to visit their clubrom, that well——" and she stopped and looked up at her father as if he were to complete her meaning.

"Do come! We shall be glad to show you our room," the boys cried in one voice.

So that is how it happened that the next Monday afternoon, after school hours, Miss Bradbury was escorted by her father to the clubroom of The President's Own, and she seemed much interested in all she saw.

"See what a nice, big closet the club has," said the general, pointing to a door which was ajar, disclosing the paraphernalia of athletic boys.

"May I look inside just once?" she asked, exchanging a glance with her father.

"Oh, do!" they answered.

And it was then that, reaching up to the shelf on which the baseball caps were tossed, the girl felt under them and drew out the lost wallet, its contents undisturbed.

The President's Own stared at Miss Bradbury as if she were a magician, but she only smiled and told them that she had mistrusted that it was there ever since her father had told her about its loss.

"A woman's fingers," she added, "are much better for finding things than a boy's—that is, the boys of The President's Own," and she smiled archly at them.

The club did not argue the point. It whistled, stamped, cheered, apologized for the racket, and immediately voted the charming girl the one and only feminine member of The President's Own.

Where?

Those fathers who were urging
J. Bull to grab his hat,
Would they now be insurging
Or calmly standing pat?
Would they with the reformers stay out
Or be in on the Aldrich lay-out?

Spreading the Fourth.

A Fourth of July that would spread itself over a week would be quite acceptable to the average patriot. He cannot crowd all his exuberance into one day and if he could the work would be so strenuous that a six days' rest to follow would be none too long. By the fortunate chance that New Year's comes along just a week after Christmas-present day we have a holiday week in midwinter, when not much more than the really necessary work is done. The world needs a similar week in the summer. The whole thing would be solved if some great American had been thoughtful enough to be born on July 11, so that we could celebrate his birthday and have a breathing interval in between. Will some child who was born on that day please bestir himself and do something so grand that he will force the celebration of his birth throughout the United States?

Couldn't.

"Well?"

"Ask yer missus kin she give a poor man a bite?"

"I know she can't without asking her. She hasn't got a tooth in her head."

A New Attraction.

You may see something new in the circuit this year. A new animal has come to American. It is a cantchill. If you should see it you might think that somebody had had a lot of pieces of toy animals and, in default of something better to do, had made them into one whole animal. The cantchill is as large as a fox terrier puppy that is just learning how to walk straight. It is white, looks rather like a rabbit, and has a deer's head without the antlers, and deer's hoofs. It really is a sort of deer, and it comes from Australia.

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HOME AND FASHION

A New Embroidery.

China beads are much used in embroidery for all sorts of materials and occasions. Lovely scarfs of messaline have on the ends a deep border done in beads of a different color, as tiny white beads on a pink scarf or pink beads on white.

Chiffon tunics also have designs in these beads and they have even been used on lingerie frocks of handkerchief linen or mull.

The work is done by hand and any motif suitable for braiding can be selected. By varying the size of the beads, also the colors, stunning effects can be obtained with comparatively little work.

Be careful not to pull or draw the material in working; also see that each bead is sewed so tight that if one goes the entire design is not a wreck. This can be managed by taking a tiny back stitch on under side of bead. When working on sheer materials paste it first to tissue paper.

Smart looking parasols in colors are finished with a wide border of these china beads.

An effective design for a lingerie frock would have the front of the blouse closely embroidered, smaller motifs on each side of back, deep band around bottom of kimono sleeves and an eight or ten inch band on the skirt.

When working in bands have two or more straight rows of beads on each edge with the scroll design within.

In doing this embroidery ask for the china beads, or you may be put off with metallic or glass ones, which are not half so new.

Mourning Etiquette.

Mourning may be worn for six months, or a year, for a brother or sister. In one case, a person goes into gray and lavender, etc., at the end of six months, and in the other, at the end of the year. One never goes from black to bright colors.

Three rows of ribbon at the bottom of a net veil is the kind suitable, and it is worn during the mourning period. White mull collars and cuffs are deep mourning, and so proper at any time. They should not be worn during the funeral.

Plain gold jewelry is proper to wear at any time after the funeral, unless a woman wears crepe. In such a case only black jewelry is possible. Gold is not worn until crepe is given up. Pearls are worn in deep mourning.

Hemstitched white lawn collar and cuff bands may be worn in the deepest mourning. If heavy mourning has been put on, only black jewelry is good form, but if only black, without crepe, is used, plain gold jewelry is all right unless many pieces are put on at a time. The point is, a person is not supposed to go into self-decoration when wearing mourning, but a watch or eyeglass chain and a few pins may be brought under the head of requirements.

A New Idea.

"Carmen Sylva," the Roumanian Queen, who recently penned so interesting a preface to a volume on tatting by Lady Hoare, has thought out some new and beautiful ways with her shuttle.

She uses only very rich, deep colors of silk, purple and blue and crimson, and works in with her stitches a number of semiprecious stones, such as topazes, amethysts and peridots, and sometimes she will mix in amber, corals and pearls.

The Queen's stones are real ones and bored so that she may pass her needle through them, but the effect of the ordinary colored bead mingled with tatting silk appears happy enough.

To turn from tatting to embroidery! It is certain that any woman who has artistic taste and is skillful with her needle may have ornaments at will for every occasion and every costume during the present season.

Let her but provide herself with strips of velvet, metal braids, ribbon or lace, and purchase of the jewels that are to be had at the drapers' or fancy work shops in all sizes and colors and shapes, and, moreover, are flattened on one side and pierced.

Unfrayed Scallops.

Some housekeepers object to the buttonholed scallop on embroidery, because it frays in washing. This can be overcome in several ways. The surest is to buttonhole a second time over the purled edge, when the scallop has been worked and cut out.

Another method is to run the outline of the scallop with machine stitching before buttonholing. Or in cutting leave a narrow margin and turn back under the scallop and hem to the material.

If these are too much trouble, at least wash the linen before cutting out. The material shrinks and is much less likely to fray. Where the entire piece is not washed, the embroidered edge can be dipped in lukewarm water for a few minutes, then ironed dry and later cut out close to the purled edge.

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7047—Plain Blouse or Under-Slip, 34 to 42 bust. For a woman of medium size will be required 2¼ yards of material 27, 1⅞ yards 36 or 1¼ yards 44 inches wide.

7048—Child's One-Piece Dress, 2, 4 and 6 years. For a child 4 years of age will be required 1⅞ yards of material 27, 36, or 44 inches wide, with ½ yard 27 inches wide for the bands or ⅞ yards for bands and belt.

7061—Yoke Blouse, 34 to 40 bust. For a woman of medium size will be required 2¼ yards of material 27, or 1⅝ yards 36 or 44 inches wide, with ⅝ yard 27 inches wide for yoke and cuffs, ⅞ yard of lace 7 inches wide for the under sleeves.

6938—Fancy Blouse, 34 to 42 bust. The quantity of material required for the medium size is 2½ yards 27 inches wide, 1⅝ yards 36 or 1½ yards 44, with 1 yard 18 inches wide for chemisette and under sleeves ½ yard 18 for the collar and cuffs.

7040—Surplice Peasant Waist, 34 to 42 bust. 6917—Circular Skirt Lengthened by Circular Flounce, 22 to 32 waist. For a woman of medium size the blouse will require 1½ yards of material 36 to 44 inches wide, with 2¼ yards of lace and 2¼ yards of trimming; for the skirt will be needed 5 yards 36 or 3¼ yards 44 inches wide, with 2½ yards of lace banding.

7038—Five-Gored Skirt, 22 to 30 waist. For a woman of medium size the skirt will require 5 yards of material 27, 2⅞ yards 36 or 44 inches wide when material has figure or nap, 3⅝ yards 27 when material has neither figure nor nap; for the yoke will be needed 1⅛ yards 27, or 1¼ yards 36 or 44 inches wide. The width of the skirt at the lower edge is 2⅝ yards.

7026—Child's French Dress, 2, 4 and 6 years. For a child of 4 years of age will be required 1⅝ yards of material 36 inches wide, with 2⅛ yards of flouncing 11 inches wide, and ¾ yard of banding to make as shown in front view; 2⅝ yards 27, 2½ yards 36 or 2 yards 44 to make as shown in back view.

7023—Semi-Princess Dress, 34 to 42 bust. For a woman of meduim size the gown will require 8 yards of material 27 inches wide, 5¾ yards 36 or 5¼ yards 44, with 6 yards of tucked banding and 20 yards of insertion. The width of the skirt at the lower edge is 2⅞ yards.

7053—Girl's Dress, 6, 8 and 10 years. For a girl of 8 years of age will be required 3⅝ yards of material 27, 2½ yards 36 or 2⅜ yards 44 inches wide.

6569—Misses Princesse Petticoat, 12, 14 and 16 years. The quantity of material required for the medium size (14 years) is 3½ yards 36, 3 yards 44 inches wide with 16½ yards of insertion, 6¼ yards of embroidery 4½ inches wide, 3 yards of edging and 2¾ yards of beading.

HOW TO GET THE FREE PATTERN COUPONS.

Here is the way we will do it: To every one who will send us one dollar for a year's subscription to The Chicago Ledger we will send absolutely free five pattern coupons. Each coupon will be good for one pattern and you can select the patterns from those illustrated in any issue of The Chicago Ledger. When you see a pattern that you like all you have to do is to send us a coupon and it will be sent to you at once. In this way you will have hundreds of patterns from which to pick the five that you will be entitled to, and you will have all the time you need to pick out the ones you want.

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The Ledger's Splendid Free Pattern Offer. Read All About It

THE GOOD OLD DAYS.

No, we need not be downhearted
For the times that are departed.
Insane pleasure, we admit it,
Is absurd—we ought to quit it,
So today we pause in wonder
That we stood so long, by thunder,
For the riot and the rattle
Of the Independence battle;
That the world was not astounded
By the list of killed and wounded
By the wreck and consternation
In the wake of celebration—
Children coming home to mother
With one eye merged with the other,
Minus toes and minus fingers.
How the memory of it lingers!
How in Christmas did we stand it?
Surely it were time we canned it.

The Boy and Torpedoes.

There was once a boy that was rather a small boy and timid. He did not like Fourth of July over much, and he had a deathly fear of firecrackers. He was not such a dried-up young person that he had lost all human feeling, however, and so when the time drew near to Independence Day he bought a big supply of torpedoes, all carefully packed in sawdust. He lectured the other children on the dangers of shooting squibs and felt quite proper and holy as people usually do when they are being better than they ought to be, and he went to work with a full heart to unpack his torpedoes. He put them in his pockets, the hip pockets, with only little flecks of sawdust powdered over them, and then he started outdoors. He went across the porch and had got half-way down the stairs when a firecracker exploded around the corner of the house. He was so startled that he lost his balance and sat down. He sat down hard, just as one usually does sit down when one loses one's balance, but he did not stay down. He sat down on the torpedoes and that is why. There had never been such a big noise on the Fourth of July as that little boy made when he sat down on two hip pockets full of torpedoes. And every Fourth of July after that he got the biggest cannon-crackers he could find so that he might not be tempted to buy torpedoes again and run the risk of getting blown up every time he might want to rest a while.

Do You Know This?

The declaration of American independence was signed July 4, 1776, and yet that was not the first declaration of American independence. For several years the American colonists had been objecting to the way in which Great Britain, the mother country, was trying to direct their affairs, and in May, 1775, a committee of citizens of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, drew up an astonishing resolution. They declared that the British Government had no right to do as it was doing and that its control of the colonies had therefore ceased to exist. This declaration was similar in spirit to that of the next year, which is known to every schoolboy and schoolgirl.

Two Patriots.

Said a modest graham cracker to a
snappy firecracker,
"I'm very, very thankful that I'm not
afraid to die,
For when I see the flying flags and hear
the cannons booming,
I shall be consumed with fervor on the
Fourth of this July."

Said the snappy firecracker to the modest
graham cracker,
"You really need not pride yourself on
being taken first,
For when I hear the children shout, and
gay torpedoes snapping,
I shall feel so partriotic I am sure that
I shall burst."

Double Fourth.

There was great consternation in the village as the month of July approached. The children, on looking at the calendar, had found that there was no fourth on it. The third was there, but next to it came the fifth, with no sign of a fourth between them. The calendar man said that he had left it out by mistake, but the children suspected that he had been bribed to do so by a disagreeable old fellow, whose name was Mudd. He was always complaining of the noise and the smell of gunpowder. However, it was a serious matter and something must be done. All sorts of plans were suggested. Some proposed celebrating on the third or fifth, but how could you make either of them into the fourth. Others suggested the fourth of August, but that seemed an awfully long time to wait.

At last, Tommy Cocker said he had thought out a plan and told the children to meet him after school. Tommy was learned in arithmetic. He had gone through addition, subtraction and multiplication and had even made some way in division. In fact, he was quite what is called a mathematician, so it was quite clear he was the boy to find a way out of the difficulty.

After school the children met and Tommy addressed them as follows:

"I have given much thought," said he, "to find a way of thwarting this wicked plot. At first I tried to put a 4 between the 3 and 5 on the calendar, but there was no room and it spoiled the look of the calendar. So I brought mathematics into play. You must know, or you will know, when you get as far advanced in arithmetic as I am, that 3 and 5 make 8."

And he chalked it on the blackboard like this—3 plus 5 equals 8.

"But we don't want any old 8th of July and so I have divided the 8 by 2 which gives us two fourths, which is twice as good as one. Now you must all carefully print four on two pieces of paper, and paste one over the three and the other over the five on your calendars, and that will give us two Fourths of July."

The children gave four cheers for Tommy Cocker, and did as he directed.

The parents did not quite like the idea, as, of course, they had to give double money for firecrackers and fireworks, and to provide ice cream for two days running, and so they took care the calendar man should not make the same mistake the next year. As for Mr. Mudd, he was mad all through and made himself as disagreeable as possible. But when he got to the point where he could not possibly be more disagreeable he began to improve until now he is quite a nice old gentleman. The best of all, however, was that the children found how useful arithmetic is. Many of them had thought it was only taught them out of spite, but now they were eager to learn, and the village school has become quite famous for the mathematicians it turns out.

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